THEMES OF ISOLATION IN SASKATCHEWAN RADIO DRAMA

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ABSTRACT

Powerful themes of physical and emotional isolation are found in the Saskatchewan radio plays stored in the CBC files of the Saskatchewan Archives Recorded Sound Collection. Based on the examination of a selection of these plays in their audio format, this thesis will explore themes of isolation and how they are developed in contemporary Saskatchewan radio drama as organized into the following three categories: Timescape, Landscape, and Bodyscape. The Timescape chapter deals with themes of isolation and history plays. The Landscape chapter explores isolation and landscape within three radio plays by James Quandt. The Bodyscape chapter is dedicated to plays with themes of isolation, health, and healthcare. It also highlights the abundance of playwriting by women on healthcare topics. In doing so, the thesis addresses two larger questions: 1. To what extent are themes of isolation and the struggle to relieve it developed by Saskatchewan playwrights on the radio? And 2. If the most acute geographic and demographic isolation experienced by Saskatchewan residents was historic, i.e. during the history of European settlement, why are there still strong thematic currents of isolation appearing throughout Saskatchewan radio plays written *after* 1980? The development of themes of isolation in this selection of plays often reinforces the value of community and the dangers of isolation. The critical framework of the thesis relies most heavily on the thoughts of Northrop Frye, Margaret Atwood, Kelley Jo Burke, and Carol Gilligan. Most of the plays discussed were produced during the period between 1978-1988. These were the first ten years of local, full time radio drama production at CBC Saskatchewan in Regina. An annotated bibliography of the plays studied en route to this thesis follows the text.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION:

ISOLATION, RADIO DRAMA, AND SASKATCHEWAN

Historically, Saskatchewan has been known as a province with a great deal of space and comparatively few people to inhabit it. Saskatchewan residents telling stories of lonely settlers' shacks facing howling winds are familiar, if not especially current. The howling winds remain, but the settler shack has since become the stuff of archival photos and museums. However, a larger percentage of Saskatchewan's residents than the national average still live in rural areas. There is an enduring power to themes of isolation in stories from Saskatchewan. Powerful treatments of themes of physical and emotional isolation are found in the Saskatchewan radio plays stored in the CBC files of the Saskatchewan Archives Recorded Sound Collection.

Based on the examination of these plays in their audio format, this thesis hopes to address two larger questions: 1. To what extent are themes of isolation and the struggle to relieve it developed by Saskatchewan playwrights on the radio? And 2. If the most acute geographic and demographic isolation experienced by Saskatchewan residents was historic, i.e. during the history of European settlement, why are there still strong thematic currents of isolation appearing throughout Saskatchewan radio plays written *after* 1980?

***The terms of argument*:**

Isolation, as it will be used in this thesis, will stay fairly close to the definition provided by the Oxford English Dictionary[1]:

> **Isolation - 1. a.** The action of isolating; the fact or condition of being isolated or standing alone; separation from other things or

[1] http://dictionary.oed.com/

> persons; solitariness. **2. a.** *Psychol.* and *Sociol.* The separation of a person or thing from its normal environment or context, either for purposes of experiment and study or as a result of its being, for some reason, set apart.
> **Isolate**, *v.* - **.** *trans.* To place or set apart or alone; to cause to stand alone, detached, separate, or unconnected with other things or persons; to insulate.
> **Isolate**, *a.* (*n.*) - **d.** *Social Psychol.* A person who, either from choice or through separation or rejection, is isolated from normal social interaction.

In the case of health and healthcare, the more specifically medical application of the definition will also be of interest, especially in the chapter *Bodyscape*.

> **Isolation - c.** *spec.* The complete separation of patients suffering from a contagious or infectious disease, or of a place so infected, from contact with other persons. Also *attrib.* in ***isolation hospital***, ***camp***, etc., that by which isolation is effected.
> **Isolate - 4.** To cut off (an infected person or place) from all contact with others; to subject to strict quarantine.

Also, note the difference between *isolation* and the OED definition of *alienation*: "**Alienation:** 1. a. The action of estranging, or state of estrangement in feeling or affection." The term *isolation* has been chosen rather than *alienation* because isolation has a stronger sense of physical and social separation as well as psychological separation from others.

This thesis will explore the treatment of isolation, in all its diverse meanings, within the context of contemporary Saskatchewan radio drama. This study will be divided into three major chapters: Timescape, Landscape, and Bodyscape. Timescape concentrates on themes of isolation as expressed in history plays. Landscape explores isolation and landscape within three radio plays by James Quandt. Bodyscape focuses on plays dealing with themes of isolation, health, and healthcare, and on the gender of those most inclined to write on such topics, women. Through these chapters, my critical

framework will rely most heavily on the observations and theories of Northrop Frye, Margaret Atwood, Kelley Jo Burke, and Carol Gilligan.

Timescape: History Plays and Isolation will explore plays that deal with characters and stories from Saskatchewan history. These include the stories of Tom Sukanen, The Willow Bunch Giant, and Piapot, as well as the experiences of early settlers and farmers as envisioned by playwrights of later decades. Northrop Frye's The Archetypes of Literature (1951) and Anatomy of Criticism (1957) are of particular interest, especially as the human experience of isolation corresponds to many of the images, symbols, and myths expressed in the tragic side of his critical *cycle*.[2] Radio drama is an immediate genre that has a very short time to tell a story. In this collection of plays, the average playing length is twenty to thirty minutes. In order to more quickly connect with the listener and facilitate the action of the play, radio playwrights often employ the familiar while appealing to the deeper archetypal or mythic dimensions of even local characters and situations.

Frye's cycle provides a road map for familiar cycles: "the solar cycle of the day, the seasonal cycle of the year, and the organic cycle of human life" (Bate 606).[3] In this selection of radio plays, the listener encounters such familiar phases as "the sunset, autumn and death phase. Myths of the dying god, of the violent death sacrifice and *isolation of the hero*. Subordinate characters: The traitor and the siren" and the tragic turns of "The darkness, winter, and dissolution phase. Myths of the triumph of these powers; myths of floods and the return of chaos, of the defeat of the hero and Götterdämmerung myths. Subordinate characters: the ogre and the witch" (Bate 606,

[2] As laid out in The Archetypes of Literature – see diagram in the *Appendix A: Frye Chart.*
[3] For a visual representation of more of Frye's cycles, see *Appendix A: Frye's Theory of Drama.*

italics added). This isolated hero and the harsh climate of Frye's tragic vision are readily found in many of the radio plays dealing with Saskatchewan history.

While images of the hero-in-isolation, winter, death, and wilderness are all important to Frye's realm of tragedy, images of community, summer, rebirth, and the pastoral garden are equally important to his vision of comedy. *Timescape* will also explore how some Saskatchewan radio plays evoke the comic elements of Frye's cycle, despite the resolutely tragic characters and situations within the plays. Aspiring to the higher, comic side of Frye's cycle is what keeps some characters struggling on through adversity.

Another useful work to this study is Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature by Margaret Atwood. Survival was written in 1972 and is being re-issued this year, with a new introduction by Atwood.[4] The bulk of the dramas in this thesis will be drawn from 1980-1988, a period during which Atwood's model was still influential in Canadian letters. Atwood's observations on the difference between explorers and settlers in Canadian literature and their relationship to the land are particularly relevant when analyzing radio plays with historic themes:

> Usually explorers enter chaos and emerge from it; they do not try to impose order on it. That's an activity more characteristic of settlers. They do not move through the land, they go to one hitherto uncleared part of it and attempt to change Nature's order (which may look to them like chaos) into the shape of human civilization.[5] (Survival 120)

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[4] by McClelland & Stewart.
Review: "what this new edition of *Survival* does highlight, instead, is the lack of other books on the same subject since Atwood's" and "Where is the work being done now along similar lines?"
McClennan, Robert. "The Original Survivor." The Peer Review vol. 2 – no. 1, Fall 2004. 27

[5] "the shape of human civilization: houses, fenced plots of ground with edible plants inside and weeds outside, roads; and, later and for purposes other than survival, churches, jails, schools, hospitals, and graveyards" (120).

Often in these plays a settler desires to reshape nature as he[6] dreams of creating a private Utopia for himself and his family. But his desire for a private, perfectly ordered piece of the earth is unattainable. In Atwood's view, the definition of order is at the heart of conflicts between Man and Nature, "The order of Nature is labyrinthine, complex, curved; the order of Western European Man tends to squares, straight lines, oblongs, and similar shapes" (Survival 120). The fact that there is a resulting conflict is not the fault of Nature, but that of the settler:

> the Canadian pioneer is a square peg in a round hole; he faces the problem of trying to fit a straight line into a curved space. Of course, the necessity for the straight line is not in Nature but in his own head; he might have had a better time if he'd tried to fit himself into Nature, not the other way round (Atwood 120).

But the settler does not try to fit in, leading inevitably to human tragedy and to destruction. As Atwood explains, the "settler theme in Canadian literature breaks down -- and again this is a guess -- into two motifs: -- straight line battles curve and wins, but destroys human 'life force' in the process. -- straight line deteriorates and the curve takes over again; that is, settlement fails" (Survival 122). This straight-line-versus-curve battle is readily apparent in the plays discussed in this chapter.

The hero of these history-inspired Saskatchewan radio dramas tends to be a cold and isolated figure engaged in a futile quest that takes him increasingly away from anything resembling "a normal environment or context." In Survival, Atwood contends that "the traditional hero is defined by the purpose and quality of his death" (166). American and British heroes fulfil these roles well, but differently: "The American way of death, as demonstrated by both history and literature, is death by violence… The English way of death, insofar as there is a single one, is death by history" (Atwood 166).

[6] Very rarely is the nature-straightening settler a woman.

Atwood cites the battlefield, the Tower and the scaffold as means by which one can die via history. She contends that this contrasts the death of the typical Canadian literary hero, who often suffers "death by accident. … The victims may acquire a certain stature by their courage and dignity in the face of death, but the deaths themselves are senseless and accomplish nothing" (166-7). The Canadian hero dies, but for little or no good reason. I would add that before the hero dies, he or she must struggle with terrible isolating circumstances.

Some Saskatchewan radio playwrights have held on to images of death, cold, and isolation longer than some may deem necessary. The era of settlement that gave rise to such stories is long past. That playwrights still find value in such stories in the 1980s could be a reflection of location, climate, and economics. For a contemporary voice of Saskatchewan radio drama I turn to Kelley Jo Burke, the current spoken-word producer for CBC Saskatchewan's *Gallery*[7] and a playwright of note in her own right.[8] Kelley Jo Burke, when talking about things Saskatchewan playwrights have tended to write about, compares Saskatchewan writing to writing from other "frozen steppes" around the world. Burke admits that part of the darkness shaping some playwrights' vision is a result of a persistent local mythology of the isolation and dangerous climate of Saskatchewan that is also highlighted in settlers' stories. "The people who came here would often only have one person to talk to for twenty miles around them and those people became, not the incidentals they become in urban literature, but necessities of life" (interview).

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[7] Most of plays studied were produced in the era of Burke's predecessor, Wayne Schmalz. Schmalz published two books related to Saskatchewan radio history and his work as a drama producer for CBC Saskatchewan radio: On Air: Radio in Saskatchewan and Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Both were of great help to this thesis.

[8] Besides being the current spoken-word producer for CBC Sasaktchewan's Gallery, Kelley Jo Burke is a poet, playwright, director (stage and radio), and documentarian.

Burke also addresses the question as to why so many contemporary plays exist that deal with the tragic, lonely, and deadly themes of Saskatchewan's past. The settler-era was long gone by the 1980s, but the images remain. This may have less to do with remembering history than it does in dealing with recent economic and ecological stresses on the Saskatchewan farming community. Burke suggest that the end of the farming way of life for so many Saskatchewan farmers as a crisis that still resonates in the darker themes that surface in Saskatchewan radio drama of the past 25 years. She observes that, when it comes to Saskatchewan playwrights, "we like death by the dozens. Actually, we decided that the quintessential motif for a Saskatchewan piece of writing was an old lady dying in the snow" (interview). This old, dying woman has deep resonances within Saskatchewan. Burke elaborates that, while Saskatchewan's population is aging, one should also consider:

> the notion that, for the last 25 years, there's been a way of life dying -- and that for that the metaphor of a woman, especially an older woman, is apt -- because a woman is so closely associated with the land, and to the kind of economy that Saskatchewan has had, you know -- Mother Wheat? That old lady dying in the snow, that's us -- to a generation of playwrights.

In the 1980s, factors like low grain prices and the longest drought since the 1930s accelerated the rural exodus of Saskatchewan farm families to urban centres. Stories of settlers trying and failing still ring true to farmers, especially those getting ready to auction off their great-grandfather's home quarter.[9] In the heart of next-year-country, hope and community can sustain, but only while the bank plays along.

In ***Landscape: Isolation and Quandt***, the power of setting is studied through three plays by James Quandt. Frye's thoughts on the dominant images of winter, barren

[9] - Ranchers too, considering the recent economic fallout related to fears of Mad-Cow disease in North America.

landscapes, witches/old women/crones in the tragic cycle will continue to be applied. The presence of Frye's "unformed world" such as the sea instead of the more comic green worlds of "faerie and fantasy," will also be considered. Again, tragedy draws on isolation, not community. In Quandt's plays, the saving power of community is highlighted. In terms of Frye's archetypes, this saving the hero from the edge of death swings the cycle towards comedy.

Quandt's plays will also provide a chance to meet both Atwood's Nature-the-Monster and Nature-as-Woman. Atwood develops the argument that many Canadian writers are influenced by their natural surroundings. To the Canadian writer, landscapes are as much about state-of-mind as they are about physical surroundings (Survival 49). Atwood's Nature the Monster is vast, powerful, indifferent to humans and very real – especially when at its coldest and harshest:

> Images from Nature are almost everywhere. Added up, they depict a Nature that is often dead and unanswering or actively hostile to man; or, seen in its gentler spring and summer aspects, unreal. There is a sense in Canadian literature that the true and only season here is winter: The others are either preludes to it or mirages concealing it (Atwood 49).

Atwood also writes that in Canadian Literature, some writers are not only obsessed with winter but also harbour a deep distrust of nature (Atwood 51). This echoes Frye's thoughts on the tragic modes of the untamed, the heath, and the desert of the animal world, the vegetable world, and the mineral world respectively. Nature in Canada, Atwood contends, is especially jarring in the post-Enlightenment age when God is dead and Nature is no longer the friendly Wordsworthian force she once was. Characters encountering such a force often find it dangerous, for "Nature [is] seen as dead, or alive but indifferent, or alive and actively hostile towards man… The result of a dead or

indifferent nature is usually a dead man, and certainly a threatened one" (Survival 54). This threatened character can be in grave danger, for "Death by Nature – not to be confused with 'natural deaths' such as heart attacks – is an event of startling frequency in Canadian Literature; in fact it seems to polish off far more people in literature than it does in real life" (Atwood 54). To Canadian authors, Nature has several means at her disposal for dispatching characters, but the two most popular are "drowning and freezing, drowning being preferred by poets – probably because it can be used as a metaphor for a descent into the unconscious – and freezing by prose writers … there is lots of water and snow in Canada and both make good murder weapons" (Atwood 55). Both of these methods are at play in the three plays of James Quandt studied here.

Nature as Woman is another common image in Canadian literature. Atwood muses, "Let us suppose that Woman is Nature, or Nature is woman. Obviously the kinds of female figures that can be imagined will then depend on what kind of place you live in" (Atwood 200). This image comes from Atwood's musings about the kind of woman that seems most prevalent here, for "if you trusted Canadian fiction you would have to believe that most of the women in the country with any real presence are all over fifty, and a tough, sterile, suppressed and granite-jawed lot they are" (Survival 199). Hagar Shipley from Margaret Laurence's The Stone Angel is invoked by Atwood as a typical ice or granite woman icon (Survival 199). Atwood does acknowledge the counter-argument to "Women-Nature metaphors or equations … based on the kinds of limiting mystiques about women such metaphors foster" and credits them as valid to a point; however, "these are the patterns literature makes – literature created by women as well as men" (200).

Burke provides insight into why Saskatchewan writers like Quandt tap into images of women, cold, snow, death, and isolation. To Burke, it has as much to do with Saskatchewan ways of life dying as it does with people freezing. Building on her own interpretation of the woman-as-nature metaphor of Mother Wheat as an "old lady dying in the snow" and writing that comes from "frozen steppes," Burke also draws a strong connection between landscapes and their effect on playwrights:

> We're like Scandinavians, we're like Russians, and Ukrainians. We write about darkness and death and cold to a very substantial degree. And when we're not writing about death and darkness and cold, there's a lament of worry that runs through everything. The comedy is very black. The romances tend to be clinging to each other in a stiff wind, you know? So there's that eastern European darkness that got carried over from one steppe to another. That being said, people who live in the darkness tend to laugh more than most because what else are you going to do? So the comedy has a darkness, but also a sharpness that is very unique. And there's a constant sense too, of community being what's left when everything else is gone that runs through the work.

Atwood agrees that home and community are ways to cope with the reality of one's natural world and to make it more bearable. For "Nature is a monster, perhaps, only if you come to it with unreal expectations or fight its conditions rather than accepting them and learning to live with them. Snow isn't necessarily something you die in or hate. You can also make houses in it" (Atwood 66). In order to escape the settler mentality of fighting to tame nature, one must first accept one's new environment as home, i.e. overcome the colonial mentality and accept a new community. In Quandt's plays, communities are essential to characters' health, if not their survival.

In ***Bodyscape: Health, Healthcare, and Womens' Voices***, the question of isolation and why it continues to be an important theme in Saskatchewan radio plays written after 1980 will be viewed through the lens of health and healthcare. Here the

definition of isolation takes on medical as well as personal dimensions. Characters in these plays face isolation both in the sense that they are alone or separate and in the more clinical sense of being separated for quarantine or experiment.[10] Health care has historically been, and continues to be, an important issue for Saskatchewan residents.

What also becomes apparent when listening to plays in this collection is the prevalence of women's voices in dealing with themes of health and healthcare. As laid out in the introduction, the danger of isolation from community is very much a part of Atwood's observations in Survival. Frye's tragic archetype needs the isolated hero; community is the stuff of comedy. Kelly Jo Burke suggests that what women tend to write about for the radio play is the personal and the lonely, the stuff of secrets and fears that need to be voiced and shared and, hopefully, alleviated. Carole Gilligan writes about the importance to society of the community-centred feminine ethic of care balancing the individualistic patriarchal order of things. Gilligan writes from a background in psychology, but calls for wider shifts in social discourse from the individualistic, paternal ideal to a more relational, feminist ideal. It should not be surprising that many of the plays in this collection that address health(care) concerns are written by, and about, Saskatchewan women.

Radio Drama: Audience, Isolation, Attention, and Study

Canada is a nation that possesses a small population separated by great distances. As such, this country has always been particularly receptive to radio as an instrument that relieves feelings of isolation, both physical and cultural. Saskatchewan's population has

[10] Most specifically in the play *Old Crocks*, which is set in a tuberculosis hospital, the more specific medical definition of isolation from the OED applies, being: "The complete separation of patients suffering from a contagious or infectious disease, or of a place so infected, from contact with other persons. Also *attrib.* in ***isolation hospital***, ***camp***, etc., that by which isolation is effected."

been, and continues to be, comparatively more spread out, or more rural, than the rest of Canada. Since Saskatchewan's inception as a province on September 1st 1905, its population has also been comparatively spread out and isolated. In the 1920s, 75% of the population of Saskatchewan lived in rural areas. Through the 1930s radio became, to some, the only source of relief from their feelings of isolation. Gerry Quinney spent his career as a broadcaster in Western Canadian cities like Vancouver, Kelowna, and Saskatoon. In Signing On: The Birth of Canadian Radio, Quinney recalls that, "The isolation of the prairie farmer in the winter is something the world can really only imagine, especially in the 30s. The only communication with the rest of the world these people had was through their radios" (McNeil and Wolfe). Though greater urbanization has been the norm across Canada, Saskatchewan still has a larger percentage of its population living in rural areas than the national average. In 1991, 78% of Canada's population lived in urban areas. In Saskatchewan, however, only 63% of the population lived in urban areas. As of 1996, 38.7% of Saskatchewan's population remained "rural".[11] Radio drama still plays a part in providing a "theatre" to more isolated, rural populations, as well as to urban centers in Saskatchewan.

As Anne Nothof points out, "radio drama reaches an audience at a distance, individuals without access to live theatre, who construct for themselves through the sounds on the radio a sense of other places, other people, and perhaps, of themselves" (Nothof 69). Such a receptive and isolated audience exists in Saskatchewan.

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[11] Statistics Canada Defines urban as, "areas, which have minimum population concentrations of 1,000 and a population density of at least 400 per square kilometre, based on previous census counts. All territory outside urban areas is considered rural. Taken together, urban and rural areas cover all of Canada" (page 3, www.statcan.ca/english/censusag/apr26/sask3.pdf). More Saskatchewan census information is available on-line at such addresses as: <http://www.gov.sk.ca/bureau.stats/pop/census8101.pdf>, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/censusag/apr26/sask3.pdf>, and <http://www.agr.gov.sk.ca/docs/statistics/finance/other/NumberCensusFarms.pdf>

Isolation is often a term connected to radio drama's audience. Anne Nothof in "Canadian Radio Drama in English: Prick up Your Ears" praises radio drama's ability to create theatre wherever a listener has tuned in, "for in most cases, radio drama is heard in the enclosed spaces inhabited by isolated individuals – isolated because of geographical distance, physical or social restrictions, or simply because of patterns of living and working – the long drive, the long evening" (60). Kelley Joe Burke speaks of *Gallery* audiences specifically, in terms similar to those Nothof uses in speaking of radio drama listeners in general. Burke adds more examples of the audience for radio drama within Saskatchewan:

> The cows love us. They play Gallery in all the dairy barns in Saskatchewan because they give better milk. But, certainly our audience tends to be older - but I'm always surprised by the amount of young, especially rural young people, that listen - Tends to be older, tends to be of British background. Tends to be people who have grown up listening to the CBC, or in some cases the BBC and have a taste for that. (interview)

These are listeners outside of what Burke acknowledges as the "arts audience." They are people within the creative community of the province, "people that listen to us know the people we're producing, because it's a completely Saskatchewan program. So, the writing community, the music community, stuff like that - they're a dedicated audience" (Burke interview). The fans of radio drama often are friends of the radio, looking for companionship to ease their own isolation. While radio drama listeners can feel less alone while listening to a play, it is also true that, most often, the listener is alone: at home, in the car, while exercising. Radio listeners find relief from isolation, real or imagined.

Contemporary playwrights in Saskatchewan acknowledge the need of the radio listener to feel a part of something bigger. Pam Bustin also evokes lone-ness when speaking of her imagined audience. When she is writing, Bustin confides:

> I always just think I'm talking to one person. And it's not always a specific person, it might change depending on what the call is for, I always just think of one person. … I just want to communicate a story to one person. Whoever. Especially in radio, because you're sitting alone. That's how I like to listen to radio drama. Alone in my living room with the lights out. (interview)

What gives radio its power to relieve feelings of isolation is the unlimited nature of the imaginative space wherein it lives. Tim Crook, in his 1999 book Radio Drama: Theory and Practice sums up the magical place where audio drama lives:

> Audio/radio drama shares the imaginative function which is recognized as "off stage" in live physical theatre. Hence the confidence in the expression "Theatre of the Mind". I believe this is what Marshall McLuhan meant by, "I live right inside the radio when I listen." Perhaps he should have said "radio lives right inside me when I listen" (7).

The radio listener may be listening alone, but is a large part of the creative process. It is the listener's job to transform the vibrations of air into the dramatic experience. The creators of the radio play must provide a product equal to the task of drawing in the listener, whether next door or across the province/country/world, into the collective, creative experience -- the multitude of individuals. Isolation is a part of Saskatchewan radio drama, from the themes playwrights explore to the experience of the listeners.

Despite all that radio drama has going for it, it is a genre that has always had to fight for critical attention. Almost as long as there has been radio drama, there have been those who argue that it has not received its due consideration as a literary form. Merrill Denison, the playwright who was called upon to write the Romance of Canada series of

radio plays[12], lamented eloquently on this very subject as early as 1931. In his article "The Broadcast Play" for Theatre Arts, he noted that, when it comes to radio drama, "Dramatists, critics, and audiences alike have accorded it much the same reception as they would trained seals trying to play the trombone" (1008). Sixty-eight years later in 1999, Tim Crook still argues that, "Radio drama has been one of the most under appreciated and understated literary forms of the 20th century" (Radio Drama Theory and Practice 3). This absence of a sizeable canon of radio drama studies comes despite the accessibility to the form to audiences. Peter Lewis, in his introduction to Radio Drama (1981) writes of the average person's exposure to radio drama versus live theatre:

> During the 1930s and 1940s, the average person's experience of drama certainly came much more from radio than from the stage. And today, in spite of television drama, radio drama still reaches far more people than the live theatre, which is a minority interest although it receives vastly more attention. (2)

Discussing theatre as a minority interest may sound odd.[13] Lewis is writing of the British experience, but the example can be applied here in Canada.[14] In a recent interview, Saskatchewan playwrights Pam Bustin and Mansel Robinson addressed the difference in opinion as to what constitutes a large audience to radio producers and a writer who also works outside of radio:

> *Robinson* - It's so many numbers, right? "Well, we've only got one

[12] Discussed more in *History and Isolation* and *Background* chapters.

[13] Richard Imison, *Radio and Theatre: a British Perspective* in Theatre Journal 43 (1991): "in almost every country in the developed world (for some reason or another) only a small percentage of the total population actually attends live theatre" (Imison 290).

[14] Statistics Canada's *The Daily* cites that, in the fall of 2004, 10.4 percent of Saskatchewan radio listeners listed the CBC as their favourite radio format – third in popularity behind the music formats of country (36.3 percent) and adult contemporary (22.5 percent). This is slightly less than the national average: 11.1 percent of Canadian radio listeners. Also of note: "The proportion of public radio listening increased with education and with age. In fact, the CBC was the first choice in radio for respondents with university degrees. The situation was reversed in the case of country music stations. Seniors aged 65 and over spent 22% of their listening time tuned to the CBC, compared with only 2% among young adults."

> hundred thousand listening to this program', which sounds huge to a poet or a …
>
> *Bustin* - (laughing) playwright who has ten people come to their show.

Radio drama is very accessible at the time of its initial broadcast. Part of this accessibility comes from the technology involved; a radio can be listened to, ideally, anywhere within range of the transmitter. Radio drama also owes its initial accessibility to the form itself. As Richard Imison observed in "Radio and Theatre: a British Perspective":

> Radio is the least self-conscious form of drama: it involves no preparation or formal disposition on the part of the listener. It is a private experience, even when more than one person is present, because the process of creation is continued by each one independently; the sounds may be common to all, but the pictures and the thoughts and associations are highly individual. The line from the author's mind to the listener's is very short and very direct. It is a line of pure ideas (Imison 291).

The potential accessibility of radio drama at the time it is broadcast is undeniable. Radio drama meets accessibility restrictions after it is broadcast. Comparatively few radio plays are published, distributed and critically studied – especially in relation to more "literary" forms like the novel, short story, and poetry. Radio dramas most often survive in audio form. Schöning wrote in "The Contours of Acoustic Art" of the needed effort to make radio dramas more accessible:

> The archives of the radio broadcasters are the greatest acoustic treasure trove of the twentieth century. They should be made accessible not only to commercial publishers but also to schools, universities, research institutes, and public audio libraries. The potential has scarcely been realized: *the fact that these programs were conceived for the enjoyment of the moment has tended to conceal the extraordinary cultural achievement of non-commercial, public radio*. As it is, the reputation of electronic audio-visual art in the published opinion of the cultural establishment at the end of the "electronic century" lags far behind that of the printed text, of theatre or opera (Schöning 310 – italics added).

The CBC has been internationally recognized for continuing to produce plays of popular appeal. Tim Crook, while accusing ABC Australia and the BBC of abandoning popular storytelling, praises the CBC for being "eminently more imaginative, courageous, and cost-effective with public money and produc[ing] drama for the mainstream as well as the cultural intelligentsia" (151).

Radio drama is largely for popular entertainment. It is also an important part of the literature and history of this province. One time provincial archivist Ian E. Wilson, of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, shared his thoughts on radio archives when he was interviewed on CBC Saskatchewan's *Ambience* in 1980.[15] Wilson was announcing the agreement reached that saw CBC's programming from Saskatchewan copied and saved in the Saskatchewan Archives Recorded Sound Collection. To Wilson, everyday radio programming was Saskatchewan history, for "History in Saskatchewan is about some very everyday things; about some very everyday people doing some extraordinary activities. That documentation is worth keeping. It's worth preserving."

Radio drama is a part of Saskatchewan's cultural history that is represented by the CBC Saskatchewan programming held in the Saskatchewan archives. This thesis presents a chance to begin exploring a local tradition of radio drama from its local reinvigoration in 1980.

Before 1980, radio drama production was not a priority at CBC Saskatchewan in terms of number of personnel or facilities. In the period from the 1950s to the 1970s, Kay Saddlemyer was a key figure in radio drama in Saskatchewan.[16] Saskatchewan writers Geoffrey Ursell and Barbara Sapergia describe Saddlemyer as an intrepid

[15] Wilson has since moved on to the National Archives of Canada.
[16] For a brief survey of Canadian and Saskatchewan radio drama, see the *Appendix* D: *Canadian Radio Background.*

producer at CBC Regina. He produced what radio drama there was to produce at CBC Regina from the 1950s until the late 1970s. Most of his work could be classified as educational in nature. For example, Saddlemyer produced any plays required for the daily School Broadcasts (Schmalz interview). The production facilities Saddlemyer worked with were functional but improvised. Ursell recalls the studio, "a.k.a. *The Grotto*," was built by then-music producer Rody Blanchard and several musicians (interview). Until the mid-1970s, these facilities were all that drama and music producers could hope for. But another report was on the horizon that would give the arts a higher priority for CBC Saskatchewan.

From the late 1960s through the early 1970s, CBC radio focused most of its attention on news and current events programming. This changed somewhat in the 1970s with the release of the CBC's Arts Report (1975-76). The report recommended a return to more musical and dramatic programming. In On Air, Schmalz recalls the cultural environment of the province in the mid-to-late seventies and how CBC Saskatchewan tried to reflect it, as well as his own hiring as the corporation's first regional arts director for Saskatchewan:

> The creation of the FM network in 1976 to carry this cultural programming[17] coincided with an explosion of artistic activity in Saskatchewan. New theatres, new magazines, new publishing houses and new musical groups suddenly appeared. The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television, and Radio Artists (ACTRA) began pressuring CBC to hire a local arts producer to ensure that Saskatchewan writers, now being recognized nationally for their work, were adequately represented on the national network. ACTRA dogged every step that CBC president Al Johnson, a Saskatchewan boy, took in the province until finally a new position was created in 1977. (103)

[17] Programming called for in the CBC's Arts Report (1975-1976).

Among the ACTRA members dogging the steps of Johnson was Geoffrey Ursell. Ursell successfully argued that a local radio producer with whom Saskatchewan writers could work could build on the foundational radio-drama work being done by Kay Saddlemyer (Ursell interview).

Schmalz also noted the symbiotic relationship between a revitalized radio drama tradition in Saskatchewan and the appearance of new Saskatchewan theatres. E. Ross Stuart's The History of Prairie Theatre provides a substantial overview of what he deems *The New Professional Theatre* in Saskatchewan. Stuart tracks establishment and early lives of such theatres as The Globe Theatre in Regina, which began as a school-touring enterprise in 1965 and produced its first repertory season in 1970; the shorter-lived Circle in the Centre in Saskatoon (1966-1968); and Theatre Saskatchewan in Regina (1966-1970) Twenty-Fifth Street Theatre (1972) and Persephone Theatre in Saskatoon (1974). Also playing an active role in the literary life of Saskatchewan was the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild, formed in 1969, and the later Saskatchewan Playwrights' Centre, formed in 1982.

The late 1970s and early 1980s present a very different picture of the strength of theatre in Saskatchewan when compared to the 1930s. Historically, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, radio, as one of the cheapest and most accessible of the new electronic media, was one of the factors that helped bring professional theatre to a halt in Saskatchewan. Then, most of the professional theatre touring the province was from outside Saskatchewan. In the 1970s, it was the strength of the theatre and writing

communities within Saskatchewan that helped convince Johnson to create Saskatchewan as its own CBC region.[18]

It is from this point, the appointment of Schmalz to CBC Saskatchewan, and onward that I have drawn the bulk of the plays researched for this thesis. One reason is practical. The CBC records in the Saskatchewan Archives Board Recorded Sound Collection are most complete from 1980 to the early 1990s. Another reason is the almost complete lack of critical attention devoted to the plays of this time in this province. Given that the CBC is essentially the only outlet for radio drama in Canada,[19] the appointment of a full-time-producer where once there was none in any one region could be seen as the establishment of a new tradition of radio drama. This reinvigoration of the local tradition will be explored further in my chapter on *History and Isolation*. From this point on, my main focus of study will be on provincial radio drama production as opposed to the national radio drama production. Most of the plays I encountered in the Saskatchewan Archives' CBC Collection were produced after Wayne Schmalz's appointment in 1977. With the exception of two plays drawn from the pioneering Kay Saddlemyer era, the majority of my research into plays, playwrights and themes comes from the last 25 years. Most of the plays examined within this thesis are from the period between 1980 and 1988.

[18] E. Ross Stuart's The History of Prairie Theatre; *The New Professional Theatre*; "Professional Theatre in Saskatchewan" - pp 195-207.
[19] At least in English Canada.

CHAPTER ONE

TIMESCAPE: HISTORY PLAYS AND ISOLATION

Saskatchewan radio plays inspired by Saskatchewan history often tell stories of isolation in the previously-defined sense of "being alone, separated, or removed from one's normal environment or context." The answer to my first big question, "To what extent are themes of isolation and the struggle to relieve it developed by Saskatchewan playwrights on the radio?" will become apparent as the lonely figures and situations of the following plays are discussed. The second question, "If the most acute geographic and demographic isolation experienced by Saskatchewan residents was historic, i.e. during the history of European settlement, why are there still strong thematic currents of isolation appearing throughout Saskatchewan radio plays written *after* 1980?" is also easier to answer when studying plays dealing with historical topics. Many of these plays draw inspiration from that era of European settlement and the early days of Saskatchewan's agricultural development. The heaviest immigration to Saskatchewan was in the two decades after 1900. In that period, the population jumped sevenfold from approximately 100,000 to nearly 700,000 ("Saskatchewan" *Encyclopædia Britannica*).[20]

As discussed in the *Background* chapter, CBC Saskatchewan was named its own CBC region in the late 1970s, as far as production was concerned. This began a new, or new at the provincial level, tradition of radio drama in Saskatchewan.[21] 1980 was also

[20] Find more dates and info in *Appendix E Timeline: Saskatchewan and Radio History*.
[21] A combination of factors within the CBC contributed to this new tradition of radio drama blooming in the 1980s: the 1976 Arts Report that called for more arts programming on CBC radio; CBC Saskatchewan's new designation as its own CBC region within Canada; the appointment of a full-time

Saskatchewan's 75th anniversary, which led to province-wide historical retrospection.[22] The first major series of radio plays broadcast in Saskatchewan after this radio drama revival was a series of history plays. They aired on Arts à la Carte under the series title *Festival '80 Radio Theatre*. Allan Clairmont, the host of Arts à la Carte, previewed the series as being a "cooperative effort between the CBC and the Saskatchewan Arts Board to commemorate the province's 75th anniversary" (ARCSK05333T1). Several of the history-inspired radio plays explored in this chapter were written for the *Festival '80 Radio Theatre* series.

The choice of historical material for the first major series of the new Saskatchewan radio dramatic tradition is not surprising. When a tradition of radio drama begins, a series of plays based on the history of the intended audience soon follows. Soon after CNR Radio gained enough affiliates to become Canada's first national radio network, Canadians could listen to The Romance of Canada (1931) series written by Merrill Denison with Tyrone Guthrie producing and directing.[23] The Romance of Canada was broadcast to the nation, or as much of it as could be reached by the CNR radio stations and their affiliates, every Tuesday night for twenty weeks[24] (Signing On 192). One year later and south of the border, Columbia Broadcasting Service, or CBS, also delved into historical drama. Its 1932 series, Roses and Drums retold the classic American myths of the nation's beginnings for the new medium of radio (Fink 213). It

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radio producer, Wayne Schmaltz, where there used to be only one half-time producer, Kay Saddlemyer; and the building of new production facilities at CBC Regina.

[22] Quarter-century anniversaries usually do. This is especially evident this year in Saskatchewan and Alberta as both provinces are celebrating their centennials.

[23] Find more in the *Background* chapter about Denison, Guthrie and the series itself.

[24] Herb Roberts, then the western representative of CN in Winnipeg, said the series aired on CNR stations in Ottawa, Moncton and Vancouver – CNRO, CNRA, and CNRV respectively. The series also aired over private stations on which the CNR had bought airtime: CKY in Winnipeg, as CNRW; CKCK in Regina, as CNRR; CFQC Saskatoon, as CNRS and Calgary's CFAC under the call letters CNRC (Signing On 183).

was also in the 1930s that Edmund Barclay wrote Australia's first historical drama serial for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. Entitled As Ye Sow[25], it was a half-hour weekly serial that aired for nine months and followed six generations of a family. Rodney Pybus notes in *Radio Drama: the Australian Experience* that, "historical drama has proved to be perhaps the most popular of the more serious genres for an audience that may in some ways still feel the lack of a secure national identity" (246-247).

Both Australia and Canada are nations with colonial pasts.[26] Like Australia, Canada has had its share of confusions and crises concerning its national identity in postcolonial terms. Atwood notes how this can understandably lead to retrospection, artistic and otherwise: "Part of where you are is where you've been. If you aren't too sure where you are, or if you're sure but you don't like it, there's a tendency, both in psychotherapy and in literature, to retrace your history to see how you got there" (Survival 112). If Canadian writers look to history as a way of alleviating national insecurity, Saskatchewan writers of the 1980s have twice the reason to look back in time for material, having to simultaneously address a significant provincial as well as national insecurity of identity.[27]

Radio also presented playwrights of relatively young nations, like Canada and Australia, with the means of telling their national story in a way that could be heard by most of the residents of their countries. When telling historic tales, playwrights' approaches can range between the *H*istoric and the *h*istoric. To clarify, the two approaches are:

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[25] The dates are fuzzy – best guess puts it *after* 1932 (Lewis; Pybus 267-247).
[26] Canada and Australia also lack a single, violent event or revolution which clearly defines a breaking away from colonial power and forging of a new identity as found in, for example, the USA.
[27] See introduction and Burke's comments on Mother Wheat and a "way of life dying."

1. History with a capital "H". *H*istory plays feature the historic events or historical figures as the main driving force of the narrative. These plays can take on the historic figures that have captured imaginations in the past and grown to epic, if not mythic proportions, e.g. Denison's Romance of Canada.

2. history with a lower-case "h", i.e. plays that use history as a backdrop for the story being told. The *h*istory play, leads to explorations of the everyday struggles of regular people living in Saskatchewan's past. A specific location, time, and/or event is established as the world in which the story being told unfolds. It is history, as Ian E. Wilson defines it, as being "about some very everyday people doing some extraordinary activities."[28]

The historically-inspired plays featured in this chapter range between these two ends of the scale: *H*istory to *h*istory.

Merrill Denison's Romance of Canada fits into the *H*istory play motif. Denison was assigned the task of writing plays celebrating the achievements of people of importance to Canadian *H*istory (at least Canadian History as told by the dominant patriarchal cultural majority). Soldiers, explorers and politicians like *Henry Hudson, Pierre Radisson, Montcalm, Alexander MacKenzie,* and *the Fathers of Confederation,* dominate the narrative; with the occasional nod to a brave woman (e.g. *Laura Secord* or *Madam La Tour*). Places important to Canadian history are also involved, for example, *Seven Oaks*, where the battle for control of the fur trade between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company led to a bloody encounter between HBC settlers and the Northwest Company Métis. The Romance of Canada was intended to help

[28] Full quote in *Introduction.*

establish in Canada a tradition of "indigenous radio drama,"[29] and to help boost Canadian patriotism by showcasing what were looked upon then as Canada's heroes.[30] The series was popular enough that Rupert Caplan was hired to direct a second season. Similar regional series were also successful on stations like Edmonton's CKUA, where playwrights like Gwen Pharis Ringwood and Elsie Park Gowan wrote series running from 1928 to 1941 (Londré and Watermeiser 352). It appears that Merrill Denison found dealing with *H*istory a nuisance at times. In the forward to his anthology of six scripts from the Romance of Canada series entitled Henry Hudson and Other Plays, Denison wrote:

> I believe the plays to be reasonably accurate from the standpoint of historical veracity, but I confess to having been more interested in dramatic development than with historical minutiae – although, in certain instances, dramatic possibilities have had to be sacrificed in the interests of historical fact (ix).

Denison's *H*istory plays in The Romance of Canada were very much a tool for advancing the cause of Canadians' pride in their past – especially the past of European exploration and settlement. The series was also the first dramatic effort in Canada to celebrate Canadian stories and provided a model for future Canadian playwrights. Whether they chose to follow Dennison's model or ignore it depends on whether they desired to write in the *H*istoric, or *h*istoric mode. That the series was aired in 1932 is also significant.

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[29] See quoted above. In 1931 "Canada had no indigenous radio drama" - according to Tyrone Guthrie in his book My Life in Theatre as quoted in Signing On (McNeil and Wolfe 193).

[30] Canadian Heroes as remembered by the then very patriarchal school of history. Kelsey and Fraser maintain their mythos of heroic explorers, but Laura Secord's feat is diminished when officers comment on how her journey was valiant, but inconsequential, as they already knew of American plans to attack. Denison also wrote a play about *Madam La Tour*, who battled to save her husband's fort from the Governor of Acadia. Her struggles proved fruitless, though, as she was captured and imprisoned. It is hard to be a triumphant woman in the annals of *H*istory – whether in plays of The Romance of Canada or actual history as recorded by patriarchal scholarship.

Such national cheerleading may have been thought most necessary in a Canada in the first throes of the Great Depression.

Saskatchewan was again being challenged by some hard times in the 1980s, the robust wheat prices of the 1970s having fallen. Perhaps playwrights felt a need to tap once more into stories from a past, more heroic time. Whether the plays deal with heroic, larger-than-life characters or the less heroic, Saskatchewan dramas are characterized by a pervasive sense of isolation. The characters find themselves physically, mentally, emotionally, and/or clinically isolated from what they care about.

***H*istory plays** are radio plays inspired by real characters from Saskatchewan's history. Heroes are drawn from stories of real, local people that have been told and retold. With retelling, these stories begin to grow into epic, mythic proportions. Thus, radio plays of Saskatchewan dealing with *H*istory often deal with famous, lonely, tragic figures from Saskatchewan's past.

Tom Sukanen (1878-1943) is an enduring character from Saskatchewan history whose life story already fits Frye's model of the tragic hero: isolated, accomplished, but withdrawn from society before dying alone. The apparent futility of his struggle and the pointlessness of his death place him in good stead for nomination into Atwood's hall of Canadian Heroes. The mid-to-late seventies saw a renewed interest, dramatic and otherwise, in Sukanen's story. This interest was fuelled by the re-discovery of the ship by LT. "Moon" Mullen of Moose Jaw. The ship was moved to what is now the Sukanen Ship Museum, south of Moose Jaw, and restored. Later, a small chapel was built and the ground consecrated in preparation for the re-interment of Sukanen's remains, moved

from North Battleford to lie beside his ship. The site was officially dedicated on June 19, 1977 (Mullin et. al. "Together at Last").

For the museum, LT. "Moon" Mullin, Eldon Owens and Dick Meacher collaborated on a summary of Sukanen's life.[31] Born in Finland, Sukanen was trained in shipbuilding and seafaring. He came to North America with dreams of using his skills as a steelworker to raise enough money to return to Finland and live comfortably, hopefully with a family. He began farming in Minnesota, where he married a widow and fathered four children. Word of free land for homesteading drew Sukanen north to Canada in 1911. There, he hoped to stake a claim, raise some money, and bring his family to Canada. Sukanen walked the 600 miles to the Macrorie-Birsay region of Saskatchewan where he homesteaded near the farm of his brother, Svante. By most reports, Sukanen did well as a farmer and as an inventor. He built a small-scale thresher, which he hired out to local farmers, he built a sewing machine for making his own clothes and he would also let local farmwives use it. He soon had clear title to his homestead and nine thousand dollars in savings.

Trouble began for Sukanen when he walked back to Minnesota, seven years after he left for Canada. He found his wife dead of influenza and his children scattered into foster care. Repeated attempts to reclaim his children earned him a deportation back to Canada. The Depression convinced Tom that it was time to return to Finland – in his own boat. There are some reports that he scouted the route from Saskatchewan to Hudson Bay in a rowboat first. While drought and the Depression raged in the 1930s,

[31] A more complete look into the life and works of Tom Sukanen, complete with a virtual tour of his ship, the Dontianen, can be found at the Sukanen Museum's website: http://www.sukanenmuseum.ca/.

Sukanen spent all his time and money building a boat to sail home in. [32] This made him the object of scorn from some neighbours. For six years, Sukanen worked on his ship, at the expense of his health. In order to get his boat the seventeen miles to the river, Sukanen tried winching it. He got four miles. He asked a neighbour with a steam engine to haul it for him. The neighbour refused, denouncing Sukanen's project as crazy. This refusal shocked Sukanen. He began to lose hope that his ship would ever reach water. When vandals began destroying his boat, all fight left him. His neighbours had him committed to the North Battleford institutional hospital. Sukanen died there on April 23 in 1943 (Ackerman I-5).

Sukanen's life and death have been the subject of several creative projects, including two radio plays: *The Shipbuilder* by Ken Mitchell and *Dustship Glory* by Andreas Schroeder. The story itself has strong local, national, and international appeal on a number of levels. Although Mitchell was born in Moose Jaw and grew up in the shadow of the boat, the play was produced outside of Saskatchewan and broadcast internationally. Schroeder, from outside of Saskatchewan, researched here and wrote from outside of Saskatchewan, but the play was produced and broadcast provincially. This is a Saskatchewan story that has appealed both provincially and abroad because of its adaptability to the *H*istory model of playwriting. Ken Mitchell is a prolific writer of fiction and drama.[33] Many of his plays have focused on stories and characters from Saskatchewan history. Two examples are his stage plays *Davin the Politician* (1978) and his exploration of Gabriel Dumont, *The Plainsman* (1985).

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[32] *Together at Last*, notes two options for the name of Sukanen's ship: "At the time of construction, Tom named the ship *Sontiainen*, a Finnish word meaning *Small Dung Bug*, *Dontianen* is a nick-name" (Mullen et. al.).

[33] Mitchell is currently with the University of Regina's Department of English.

Mitchell's stage play, *The Shipbuilder*, was first produced at the University of Regina in 1977.[34] Four years later, in February of 1981, the play was adapted to radio. *The Shipbuilder* was produced at CBC Vancouver and aired on CBC's National FM network. The play's strong auditory components helped it achieve widespread success on radio. As Mitchell points out, "The percussive and poetic elements took shape in radio adaptations produced successively by the BBC, Finnish National Radio, Swedish National Radio, and the CBC through the 1980s" (*The Shipbuilder* 7-8). The national and international broadcasts of this play speak to both the skill of Mitchell's playwriting and to the universal appeal of Sukanen's story.

Mitchell based his main character on Sukanen but chose to name him Jaanus Karkulainen. Mitchell portrays Jaanus as more than a mere man. Classically mythic comparisons come to mind: Jaanus's name resembles the Roman god Janus, the double-faced god of gateways and beginnings after whom January is named; Jaanus's constant pounding of metal in the glow of his forge cast him in a Hephaestus-like light while his impossible struggle to single-handedly drag his ship across the prairie brings Sisyphus' impossible struggle to mind.

Throughout the play, he is also portrayed as being strongly allied with the elemental, superhuman power of nature. Often Jaanus, unkempt and non-socialized, can inspire terror in women of the house merely by showing up on their doorsteps. Anna-Marie speaks of his almost mystic attunement to the land. She describes the labours of Jaanus and Bender, the neighbour with whom he works as doing "the labour of four men, Jaanus and Bender, working to the rhythm of the sun and the moon" (Mitchell 23). Anna-Marie, as Jaanus's daughter, describes how Jaanus appeared to claim her back from

[34] - The same year the Sukanen Museum dedicated Tom's new gravesite.

foster care, in elemental terms: “the day he stormed into my foster home he was wrapped in furs like an animal. His beard was covered with ice as though he’d burst through the ice of Superior” (Mitchell 45). Jaanus does not move, he *storms*. He is more animal than human. These comparisons, added to the image of Jaanus bursting through Great Lake ice, cast Jaanus in a supernatural light. Mitchell’s Jaanus fits Frye’s description of the hero in myth cycles as being “conceived in human likeness and yet hav[ing] more power over nature” (Bate 608).

Mitchell also places Jaanus side-by-side with central figures of New World mythology, at least from the perspective of the dominant culture. Bender defends Jaanus before a crowd of angry neighbours, comparing Jaanus’s dream to that of Canadian National Dreamer John A. MacDonald’s railroad and Columbus’s attempted voyage to India: “I bet they all told John A. MacDonald he was crazy to build a railroad across 4,000 miles a wasted hell – but he did her, didn’t he? And when Columbus set off across the Atlantic, I bet they laughed their heads off! That’s how it is with some guys – they just go ahead and bloody do it! Well – I like that. [*Pause.*] So I’m stickin’ by him” (Mitchell 80). Conveniently absent from Bender’s admiration of great dreamers like MacDonald and Columbus is an awareness of the cost of such dreams in human lives and societies lost. Jaanus dreamed a great dream, and still lost everything: his family, his sanity, his farm, his precious ship, his health, and finally, his life. But Mitchell writes that Jaanus lived on, despite great loss, because of the power of his dream. In the last scene of the play, Anna-Marie speaks of Jaanus, locked up in Battleford’s mental hospital, but his elemental vitality intact:

> Anna-Marie: He still pursues his endless dream, standing on the bridge of his ship, his heart rounding the last outcrop of the last fjord going to Suomi, and the image of a girl standing on a village dock –
> Jaanus: Anna-Marie.
> Anna-Marie: - waiting still. (Mitchell 95)

Thus, Anna-Marie bestows Jaanus with his (and her) final immortality. Jaanus triumphs, somewhat, over the petty community that tried to bring him down.

Dustship Glory by Andreas Schroeder[35] aired on CBC Saskatchewan Radio in 1988 (5 episodes at 15:00 each). The play is a five-episode dramatic look at Tom Sukanen's life, creations, demons, and downfall that was adapted from Schroeder's 1986 novel of the same name. Schroeder based his novel on fact, but makes no claim to its being historically accurate:

> Probably up to seventy-five percent of the book needed to be "invented" in some way. Which sounds like a lot, I'm sure, but what's important is exactly where that seventy-five percent is located. And in this book it's represented by a blizzard of mostly little things, conjunctions, bridges, a lot of fine-line detail. The main ingredients of the story, or most of them anyway, remain what is conventionally known as fact. (Twigg)

Unlike Denison who, in The Romance of Canada, claimed to have sacrificed dramatic possibility for fact, Schroeder is more interested in the epic story than the historic detail. The play's episodes are set up like interviews with people who knew Sukanen. Various characters serve a narrative role by recalling their experiences with Sukanen as they remember him years after his death. As they tell their stories, we fade into the past and re-live the stories they tell. Over the five episodes, the story of Tom's madness and genius is revealed. He achieved many technical feats and innovations in building his ship. But Sukanen's neighbours found reasons to dislike him: his gruff demeanour and violent outbursts – even when the violence was not initiated by Sukanen; his taste for

[35] Schroeder was born in Germany and lives in British Columbia.

rotten horsemeat; his refusal to follow the standard calendar; and his overt hatred and mistrust of women, whom he calls "witches." As neighbours and relatives retreat from his life, Sukanen retreats more and more into his own reality. He is often described as standing alone beside his ship, a hammer in each hand, pounding metal onto the hull of his boat for hours and days at a time. Neighbours and relatives do not trust his sanity and have him committed. He dies alone in the North Battleford Psychiatric Hospital after a lengthy coma. His last act is, in Schroeder's creation, to stand up and recite the precise location of the hospital, in latitude and longitude. He knows exactly where he is. His way out is death.

There are differences between Schroeder and Mitchell's retelling of Sukanen's life story. Mitchell focuses on the tragic one man of vision struggling against everyone around him. Jaanus's only real friend is his neighbour, Bender. But even he cannot protect Jaanus forever. Eventually, Jaanus breaks from sheer exhaustion and lack of community support. The action takes place, for the most part, in the then-present tense. Mitchell includes a narrative voice in the form of Anna-Marie. She represents, at different moments through the play, both Jaanus' daughter and the love he left behind in Finland. Anna-Marie speaks of Jaanus in the past tense. She is outside of the timeline of the play looking back on Jaanus' life. The fact that Mitchell names his character Jaanus, as opposed to Sukanen, also re-enforces the play's function as a fictionalized account of Sukanen's life. Mitchell stresses the mythic story over the reality.

In *Dustship,* Sukanen's life is explored largely through the eyes of his neighbours and relatives years after his death. Schroeder uses Sukanen's name in the play and his novel. The play was written in serial form; each of five episodes featured a different

acquaintance's memories of Sukanen. While these narrators all regret Sukanen's treatment at the hands of his neighbours, they speak as if they were powerless to help Sukanen, even had they wanted. They each mention that Sukanen's plan probably would have worked, but that the community was more interested in making Sukanen the focus of scorn. The community in *Dustship* plays an even more malicious role in bringing Sukanen down, first by refusing to help him haul his ship to the river, then by dismantling the hull while he works fifteen miles away. Schroeder claims that, while conducting interviews for his book, during his research he noticed, "There are still a few men sitting around looking just a little guilty about that" (Twigg). Schroeder's narrators admit, to varying degrees, they feel guilty over the treatment that Tom received. Schroeder's tale warns against punishing someone for dreaming bigger, crazier-than-normal dreams.

Schroeder's Sukanen is consciously designed to be a less mythically-proportioned hero than Mitchell's Jaanus. While Schroeder does admit that, as a novelist, he is drawn to the archetypal, mythic elements in Sukanen's story, saying "there's a damn good reason why the myths of Sisyphus or Icarus, in whatever form we come across them, are as applicable today as they ever were… what I tried to do in *Dustship Glory* was to serve the mythic resonance of Sukanen's story, to make sure that those elements which make it ageless got the necessary backlighting" (Twigg). But Schroeder also observes the Canadian tendency to play down our own heroes, saying "It's not Greek gods we're inventing here, after all. We may be celebrating vision, but it's a grounded vision after all" (Twigg).[36]

[36] Full quotation: "I'm fundamentally content with the Canadian perspective on the world, but there is a distressing Canadian tendency to want to, well, the German word is *emuchtem*, which means to neutralize, to deflate, to trivialize with sobering detail. The tendency to say, 'Yeah, that sounds pretty wonderful, but really, didn't this guy also beat his wife and cheat on his income tax? So he couldn't really have been all

Both Mitchell's Jaanus and Schroeder's Sukanen live out a great Saskatchewan tragedy. In Frye's phases, Sukanen shows himself, in some ways, to be better than his fellow man. But his flaws lead to him being tragically isolated – as either outcast or hermit. He is betrayed, not by any one traitor, but by many of his neighbours. Then, his suffering and death soon follow. He is driven to isolation and death because his world is too small to contain his glorious, heroic spirit. The senselessness of Sukanen's death also fulfils Atwood's definition of a typical tragic Canadian Hero. Sukanen struggles heroically, but dies before he can even try to fulfill his dream.

Both playwrights agree that Sukanen's hospitalization was a blow from which he could not recover. His plan - to get his ship to the river, raft it to Hudson Bay, and sail it home to Finland - was aborted. Whether or not his dream was plausible, it was left untried – killed by his doubting neighbours. Sukanen's neighbours claimed to have had him committed in order to prevent him from doing himself harm. But his neighbours' malice was also becoming a danger to Sukanen. By removing him, they no longer had a target for their frustrations. Schroeder and Mitchell agree that, by separating him from his ship and any chance of fulfilling his dream in the material world, the cure kills Sukanen as surely as if his boat had sunk on the way home. Mitchell portrays Jaanus as dreaming of finishing his voyage while in his coma, thus imagining the realization of his dream. By escaping this mortal, material world and continuing his dream, Jaanus ends Mitchell's play on a higher, more comic side of Frye's cycle. Schroeder, however, has Sukanen awake and affirm his knowledge of exactly how geographically far away he is from his intended destination, his hometown in Finland. Schroeder's Sukanen cannot

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that great, could he?' It's going to take some time and a lot more books like Hodgins' Invention of the World before we stop being so self deprecating about our heroes. It's not Greek gods we're inventing here, after all. We may be celebrating vision, but it's a grounded vision after all."

even fall back on imagination to complete his vision. This Sukanen fits more into Atwood's bleak, post-enlightenment mould of the Canadian hero. He struggles against community. But he fails. He is isolated. He dies. His struggle, though heroic, ends with his death and his unfulfilled dream. Sukanen is cast as a hero in these plays, but his refusal to live within his community can only end in failure. Community is necessary for survival.

Themes of an isolated, dying hero who dreams of better times and happier places are also present in *The Giant Who Wept* (1980, 25:00)[37] by Geoffrey Ursell and Barbara Sapergia.[38] The play was inspired by the life and death of Edouard Beaupré (1881-1904), a literally larger-than-life character from Saskatchewan history more popularly known as the Willow Bunch Giant. Beaupré was an astonishing eight feet, two and one-half inches tall.[39] *The Giant Who Wept* is an exploration of the exploits and exploitation of Beaupré both during his life and after his death. Beaupré left the family ranch, near Willow Bunch, to perform with the Barnum and Bailey Circus. He hoped to send money home to help his large, impoverished family in southern Saskatchewan. While performing at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, Beaupré died of pneumonia. His body

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[37] Written for *Festival '80 Radio Theatre.*

[38] Sapergia and Ursell both note that their work is often inspired by Saskatchewan history. This year, they collaborated on *Winning the Prairie Gamble* - a historic play celebrating Saskatchewan's history for Persephone Theatre's Youth Tour.
Ursell is a full time writer, producer, and publisher who has written fiction, poetry, and songs, and drama for television, stage, and radio. His awards include: *Perdue,* winner of the *Books in Canada* First Novel Award; *The Running of the Deer* the Clifford E. Lee National Playwriting Award; *Saskatoon Pie* won Persephone Theatre's National Playwriting Competition. Ursell is the current president and a founding member of Coteau Books (founded 1975).
Sapergia is a widely-produced writer of drama and fiction for stage, radio, film and television. Sapergia's publications include: novels *Foreigners* (1984) and *Secrets in Water* (1999); a short story collection *South Hill Girls* (1992); and a poetry collection *Dirt Hills Mirage* (1980). Sapergia has won two Saskatchewan Writers Guild Major Awards for Drama. Her produced stage plays include *Lokkinen* (1982), *Matty and Rose* (1985), *The Great Orlando* (1985), and Roundup (1990). Sapergia is a founding member of Coteau Books and is currently a Board member and Coteau's Children's Editor.
Both Sapergia and Ursell are active members of the Saskatchewan, and Canadian, writing community.

[39] 8'2½" = 246.25 centimeters.

was sold to science and his bones were eventually displayed at Montréal University for years until his relatives finally were able to obtain his remains and bury him in Willow Bunch in 1990 (Lesperance *J. Edouard Beaupré*).

Sapergia and Ursell cite the power of Beaupré's story as the inspiration for *The Giant Who Wept* and subsequent works based upon it. Sapergia recalls that "one of the reasons I was drawn to the Willow Bunch Giant was that in Moose Jaw a shoe repair shop had his shoe in the window, and I'd see that shoe and wonder about the man who could wear it." Ursell and Sapergia were also inspired by the family's fight to bring Beaupré's remains home for burial. While Sapergia points out that *The Giant Who Wept* is meant as a tribute, she also brings up the question of the "voice" of the play. She notes the value of writing "to celebrate certain things and people and make them known, as in the case of the Willow Bunch Giant. I don't know if we would do that story today, because we don't come out of the French and Métis cultures which influenced him.[40] But then, we also felt it was our story."

The Giant Who Wept is an intense, almost chaotic collage of Beaupré's memories, both narrated and re-lived. This barrage of memories is combined with an intense, original soundscape. Ursell and Sapergia spoke about how it was meant to affect the listener:

> *Ursell* – We wanted to convey the fragmentation of his life. His life in the circus--the world he had to live in order to make some money--was such a disconnect from his real existence on the prairie in Willow Bunch. The circus gave him a living, but it was a world which also killed him. It wore him out, it exhausted him. …
> *Sapergia* –Beaupré was a really absorbing character and we didn't want him to be pitiful or pathetic, but his life was tragic. There was so little

[40] Beaupré had a many-faceted voice himself. He spoke fluent French, English, Cree, and Sioux (Lesperance: *Beaupré, J. Edouard*).

> choice for him. He got pushed into a more and more frenetic pace, with less and less control over his life. Yet he was this grounded human being back in his home place.
> *Ursell* – So, we wanted the structure of the piece to reflect that feeling about his life.

The radio production was part of a larger collection of Beaupré-based projects by Sapergia and Ursell. Ursell admits that Beaupré was too intriguing a character to leave behind after one project:

> Sometimes you find a story in your own history that attracts you because it's so unusual and fascinating. And again, that's a story that we then created as a stage play for a Persephone school tour, and then I wrote a short story based on that same material, so you sometimes find things in a history that lead into a whole range of work for you. The play has even been translated into French. (interview)

Beaupré's struggles with the isolating forces of fame and exploitation are a powerful tale.

Beaupré's isolation while he performs at the World's Fair is highlighted as *The Giant Who Wept* begins. The listener hears a barker inviting fair-visitors into the exhibit of which Beaupré finds himself a part. The barker explains that the exhibit is entitled "Chronicles of Civilization's Triumphs" and ends with a "live anthropology exhibit". The barker describes "People of strange colours, and as we watch and learn from these oddities, let us hope that they take home some tincture of civilization as a lasting legacy of their stay at the fair." To the people at the fair, Beaupré is not only different, and therefore "uncivilized", but an oddity to be observed and studied as a scientific specimen. He is emotionally isolated by ignorance and fear. He is physically isolated with the show, which keeps him in a human zoo. Beaupré's isolation conforms more to the psychological and sociological definition of the word as being "The separation of a person or thing from its normal environment or context, either for purposes of experiment and study or as a result of its being, for some reason, set apart."

Ironically, Beaupré's choice to leave the caring circle of family and friends, his normal environment or context, and enter this side-show world is motivated by a desire to improve the fortunes of his impoverished family back home. Little of Beaupré's money reaches his relatives, however, and the side-show life eventually kills him. As he lies dying, Beaupré longs for a safer type of isolation, a trip home, even if the trip happens after he passes away. The play ends with the voice of Beaupré. He remembers his past and hopes he can help his family after his death. Beaupré longs for his normal environment/context: "the sheltering hills where the sickness in my chest may heal, drawn away by the hot sun and the clear sky ... when I walk alone across the wide prairie; I look like any other man." In order to appear normal, he needs to stand *alone* in a landscape devoid of landmarks which might provide a reference to his stature. Beaupré also worries about what people will do to his enormous body after he dies: "Do they think if they tear my flesh apart they will find a secret?" Beaupré asks not to be dissected, but embalmed and displayed so his family can get the money, until "one day, when everyone is tired of looking [they can] take me home to my people and lay me down in the earth … someday, I want to go home to be buried. To become part of that beautiful prairie. The earth does not judge, does not measure those who fall into it. To come back to my people. To give myself into their keeping and rest. To be allowed to rest." The only peace Beaupré can imagine is in isolation, in death and in the grave. He also invokes religion when recalling the prairie of his youth. Beaupré muses on how it is "so easy under that sky to believe in God." Beaupré, having been born and raised on the prairies, then swept into a chaotic, exploitive world, imagines his prairie home as a more welcoming place than his present situation.

As Beaupre, the hero, lies dying alone and cheated by his manager, he fulfils Frye's archetype of tragedy: "the deserted and betrayed hero" (Bate 608). The vegetable world that Beaupre longs for is similar to Frye's vision of comedy, the "garden grove, or park, or a tree of life" (Bate 608). Denied access to his life-giving prairie, Beaupre dies.

Beaupré, however, dreams of a gentler, greener, lighter place for himself as he dies. He welcomes the trip home to rest, even if it must happen after he dies. Frye's cycle allows for the preparation for the resurrection or return of the hero, on the "comic" side. As did Jaanus in Mitchell's *Dustship*, Beaupré tragically dies, but he does so aspiring to a higher, more comic place on Frye's cycle.

Beaupré can also be cast as another of Atwood's quintessential Canadian tragic heroes. He left to join the circus in order to raise money to send home to his impoverished family. While Beaupré was alive, his unscrupulous agent stole most of Beaupré's earnings. As the giant lies dying, he asks that his body be put on display, in hopes that the money people would pay to see him be sent home to his family. Again, no money reaches his family. Not only did his life away from his home contribute to his death, but his death did not help his family as he hoped it would. That dream remained unfulfilled. Beaupré also hoped to return home to Willow Bunch for burial. Then, Beaupré's second hope remained possible, but unfulfilled. In 1980, Beaupré's family was in their seventy-sixth year of an eighty-six year fight to bring Beaupré home. The play was part of a series of creative social action projects by Ursell and Sapergia aimed at raising awareness of the family's fight. A listener hearing the play after 1990 would have the benefit of knowing that Beaupré's remains now rest in Willow Bunch, fulfilling one of his dying hopes. The listener of 1980, however, would be left with none of Beaupré's

hopes resolved. Then Beaupré's death would cast him, in 1980, in the role of Atwood's Canadian Hero whose death was tragic and senseless.

The stories of both Beaupré and Sukanen share some similar features. Historically, both men's remains are returned "home" long after they die: Beaupré to rest in his home landscape of Willow Bunch and Sukanen to lie beside his ship at the museum. Dramatically, both Sukanen-based plays fall more to the *H*istory play side of the scale. The central character's exploits and endeavours are highlighted over his dreams, motivations, and emotional self. Sapergia and Ursell's *Giant Who Wept* is a play that deals with an epic character, in size and story. The explorations of Beaupré's heroic feats and his larger-than-life story makes *The Giant Who Wept* a *H*istory play. But the focus on Beaupré's personal and emotional reactions to events in his life is a nod towards the *h*istory play.

Another character from Saskatchewan's *H*istory is examined in a more personal light in Rex Deverell's *And Did the Dog See This?* (20:00).[41] The play told the story of Piapot (1816-1908) as part of Arts à la Carte's *Festival '80*.[42] Piapot was a Cree who grew up among the Sioux and eventually became Chief of (what is now called) the Piapot First Nation. After signing Treaty No.4 in Manitoba, illness and starvation on his Indian Head (SK) reserve led to his negotiating a move to the Qu'Appelle Valley in 1884. Piapot did not participate in the 1885 Riel uprising, but later ran afoul of territorial

[41] Rex Deverell (b. 1941 Toronto) Globe Theatre, holds the Canadian record for longest run as a playwright in residence, 1975-90) Plays: including: *The Copetown City Kite Crisis* 1973; *Boiler Room Suite* 1977 (Canadian Authors Award 1978); *Black Powder* 1981 (music by Geoffrey Ursell); *Righteousness* 1983; *Beyond Batoche* 1985; and *The Afternoon of the Big Game* 1988 (*Canadian Theatre Encyclopaedia*).
42 Piapot (1816-1908) A brief biography of Piapot, related treaties, and more can be found at: <http://cap.ic.gc.ca/sk/piapot/history.html>

authorities when he held an outlawed Sun Dance.[43] In 1899, the Indian Department officially deposed him as chief for allowing a Sun Dance and giving ceremony. His band continued to regard him as chief until his death.

Since this play's production, the issue of the voice of the play, playwright, and production house has become a more considered than it was in 1980. This play tells a First Nations' story. While Piapot was played by renowned Gordon Tootoosis, Piapot's words were chosen by Rex Deverell, a white playwright. The story is broadcast through the filter of the "establishment", CBC Radio. Such issues as the voice of Saskatchewan radio drama, and who has the right to speak with what voice would come to a head at CBC and elsewhere in the mid-1980s. The whole debate deserves more study.[44]

The play is set in a jail house. Piapot has been jailed for holding a Sun Dance, but the paper on his cell labels him "Drunken Indian." Piapot is Frye's hero-in-isolation; he is removed from his community and feeling betrayed by the government. His grandson, Harry, comes to visit and hears Piapot tell the story of his life. Harry finds the isolation he feels is not unlike that which his grandfather has faced and is facing. Piapot draws the parallel himself while remembering his own upbringing as a Cree among the Sioux: "It was hard to stay Cree in the camp of the Sioux. Maybe as hard as it is to stay Indian in Regina, eh?" Harry is struggling to fit in at the "Presbyterian Industrial School" where he hopes to "learn a trade." Like Harry, Piapot spent most of his life caught between different cultures, whether as a Cree in the Sioux camp he grew up in, or as a chief trying

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[43] Sun Dances were outlawed because the authorities were threatened by the dances and the giving-ceremonies associated with them. For a typical establishment view from the time, see:
"Sun Dances Stopped Indians Summarily Dealt With For Attempting Heathen Practices." Saskatoon Phoenix. June 5, 1903: 7. Saskatchewan News Index. 18 Aug 2005. <http://library.usask.ca/sni/stories/con5.html>.

[44] - more in *Conclusion* and *Appendix C: Voices Debate.*

to come to terms with the advancing hordes of white men, the railroad, and the disappearance of the buffalo. When giving advice to Harry on religion, he is pragmatic, if somewhat tongue in cheek, advising the young man to try to live as "half Christian and half Indian, so when you die, you'll only be half wrong." It is unclear at the end of the play if Harry has found comfort in his grandfather's story, but he does leave with a stronger link to his past.

The straight-line versus curve battle must be turned around when applying Atwood's settler motif to this play. Piapot is fighting the advancing straight-line mentality of European settlers. While this does smack of a limited, over-romanticized "Indian as Force of Nature" theme, the model, thus adapted, has an effective ironic edge meant to challenge the complacency of a largely white Saskatchewan audience, many of whom see themselves as being of straight-line, or "settler stock". The line versus curve struggle is most graphically shown as Piapot fights to keep the railway from bisecting his band's town. They built a lodge directly in the proposed path of the rails – the rails being a straight, iron line through the natural prairie. The straight line wins out, and Piapot's people are moved and starved. The victory of the straight line destroys the human "life force" in its wake.

_h_istory Plays

While History plays tell the stories of people who make history, history plays tell the stories of people to whom history happens. Saskatchewan's history is often used as a background against which playwrights create their stories.

Moving ahead almost fifty years from Denison's Romance of Canada, Barbara Sapergia has written several radio plays dealing with historic themes[45] from 1980 onward. She, like Denison, notes that while history can provide inspiration for writing in general, it can also provide restrictions to creativity. It all depends upon how history is employed in the writing process. In a recent interview, Sapergia notes:

> I do like working with historic stories. There are so many good ones. I don't necessarily write them exactly as they happened, but history can provide a really strong spine to a story and it can provide compelling characters. You still have to make it your own.
>
> I like to choose stories where there's room to do that. For instance, if you're going to write about Tommy Douglas, there are a lot of things that are fixed. Although there's room for interpretation, your story and characterization have to conform with what people know. This can be very exciting, but can be rather confining if you're used to making up the whole thing.
>
> That's why I'd often choose more distant periods or less famous characters (or fictional characters in a historical scene), because you have more freedom to play with it. This allows you to write the story that feels truest to you, rather than having to work around historical facts.

Sapergia prefers creating people to inhabit the *setting* of history. Where the *H*istory play is best at conveying the playwright's vision of the Hero, the *h*istory play is best at highlighting characters' lives and struggles within historical settings. Denison's work for the Romance of Canada advances the cause of *H*istory, i.e. *H*eroes to inspire a proud nation. Characters in *h*istory plays, however, highlight the everyday heroics and tragedies of everyday life in the past as freely re-created by the playwright.

Agriculture has always been a prominent force in Saskatchewan's economy. It is to be expected that stories of homesteaders and farmers are present in any collection of radio plays based on Saskatchewan history. Many of these stories of settlement deal with European Man encountering Western Canadian Nature.

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[45] for example: *Old Crocks* and *Grandma's Foot* – further explored in the *Bodyscape* chapter.

One of the earliest plays of Saskatchewan-history in the Saskatchewan Archives takes us back fifty years to the prolific playwright Mary Pattison of Saskatoon.[46] Pattison's play *Gold is Where You Find It* (30:00) fits well into the dominant educational/historical mode of the Saddlemyer era. Produced in 1955, the play marked the one-year anniversary of the opening of the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon.[47] In the play, an elementary school class visits the museum. History is taught through encounters with characters like Joe Phelps, the museum board chair; Mr. Nelson, an old thresher-operator; and Mr. Peterson, their bus-driver. Mr. Phelps teaches the children the following facts: the museum building itself is an old airplane hangar from Swift Current; it has had over 30,000 visitors since it opened; the museum's threshers' reunion recently organized by the museum that went over so well that it will become an annual event; there are new household displays; the museum is funded by grants, admission charges, and the provincial government. Phelps also points out several of the more curious displays like a 60 million-year-old stone containing a fossil leaf-print, a lady's side saddle, the 1903 Eaton's catalogue, a Red River Cart complete with authentic axle-squeak, and various cars including a 1938 Stanley Steamer.

As the class moves further into the museum, they encounter Mr. Nelson. As he tells stories of the threshing crews working his parents farm, the listener fades into warm and nostalgic dramatized scenes from Nelson's memories. The schoolchildren comment on the antiquated-looking threshing machines on display in the museum. Nelson reminds them that in fifty years, what they see as new will also look out-of-date, because

[46] More information on Pattison can be found in the *Background* chapter.
[47] 1955 was Saskatchewan's 50th Anniversary.

"Machines change, people don't."[48] Nelson tells the children about a boy who was infatuated with the huge steam engines that powered threshing machines. This boy dreamed of growing up and running a threshing outfit of his own. The children learn later that this boy was Nelson himself. Through Nelson's stories, the children (and thus the listener) learn about the daily routine of the threshing crew, and about the men who worked the threshers. When Mr. Nelson leaves, Mr. Peterson tells the children that Nelson was once a thresher-engineer, until he "tangled with a belt" and lost the use of his hand. Mr. Nelson was the boy who dreamed of running a thresher. Nelson's dream came true, but it cost him his hand.

Nelson's sacrifice fits well into Atwood's first motif of Canadian literature's settler theme, i.e. "straight line battles curve and wins, but destroys human 'life force' in the process" (Survival 122). Nelson dreams of using the triumph of western thought, technology as represented by the thresher, to tame the prairies. He succeeds in doing so, thus straightening "the curve," but loses part of himself in the process. But Atwood's settler view cannot encompass the optimistic tone of the rest of the play. The children are looking back from a position of the victory of the straight-line motif. The loss of Nelson's hand is only referred to; it is not dramatized. Moreover, the scenes from Nelson's childhood are optimistic. His parents succeed in settling and farming their section. The farming society has prospered enough to have created a museum celebrating itself. The victory of the straight-line is celebrated in this radio play of the mid-1950s.

Mr. Nelson is a character who has suffered isolation and loss on several levels. The children discover him wandering alone through a museum displaying the outdated

[48] This comment was especially jarring to a researcher listening to the play in 2004, when this play, about history, is also a kind of historical artifact.

machines of his prime. While the children represent a vision of friendship and community akin to Frye's archetypal images of the human world of comedy, Nelson's isolation fits Frye's tragic archetypal image of the human world. Nelson is isolated because his occupation is now history. When the old-time thresher was relegated to history by the combination harvester, the thresher's steam engineer became antiquated as well. Compounding this isolation for Nelson is the fact that he was removed, or isolated, from the threshing crews even before the threshing crews were antiquated. The thresher took his hand. So painful is this loss to him that he can't even tell the children that he *was* the little boy who realized his dream of becoming an engineer on a threshing crew. Mr. Peterson has to reveal this to the students after Nelson has left. Nonetheless, there is a sense that Nelson's loss was part of the evolution of technology – the great advance of invention. Though Nelson's personal loss is tragic, society progresses as a result of such sacrifices by its pioneers.

The children commented on how far machinery has come since farmers used the museum-retired threshers. The museum can be seen as both a celebration of past technologies and as a graveyard full of out-of-date hulks of metal, once-animated and vital machines that now sit silent and still. This mechanical graveyard evokes Frye's "tragic vision [of] the mineral world" which "is seen in terms of deserts, rocks and *ruins*" (quoted in Bate 608 – italics added). The children, however, swing the cycle to a higher, more comic point in Frye's cycle. They are youth, the dawn, and hope for the future. They feel more in awe of Nelson's sacrifice than sorry for his loss. In this educational drama of 1955, there is a sense of prairie histories being stories of *necessary* sacrifice and loss. Optimism wins out over sorrow. Perhaps this optimism is a reflection of the post-

war, post-Depression optimism that was fuelling the North American baby-boom. Saskatchewan of the 1950s was particularly booming, with the drought and Depression well over and the new mineral discoveries like oil, gas, potash, and uranium raising economic hopes in the province ("Saskatchewan", *eb.com*).

Agriculture and settlement were also well-represented among the plays of *Festival '80 Radio Theatre*, with isolated characters once more suffering sacrifice and loss for the sake of agricultural advancement. What is not as clear in the plays of 1980, written during less optimistic times, is whether the sacrifice was worth the gain. The scope of these plays has narrowed from Denison's wider focus on celebrating the historic accomplishments of his heroes or Pattison's greater epic sweep of social advancement. Starting with *Festival '80*, the focus moves more to explore the personal toll that isolation and sacrifice could have taken on early settlers and farmers who came to Canada in search of often-unattainable Utopias.

Lonely sacrifice and the pursuit of a Utopian dream in the Last Best West are at the heart of James Brewer's *The First Step* (1980, 25:00). The play is the story of a young man, Frank Dobson, who emigrates from London, England to Western Canada. Frank is hoping that Canada can provide a better life for his family than Britain can. Time is of the essence for Frank as his wife, Lily, is pregnant with the couple's first child. Together Frank and Lily come up with a plan: Frank will travel to Canada alone and work to raise money for Lily and child to follow later. The listener travels along with Frank. Frank and Lily read their letters to each other, which fulfill a narrative role through the play.

The play opens in London, where Frank and Lily are reading a pamphlet which advertises the glorious opportunities available in Canada.[49] The pamphlet boasts of "125,000 free farms ... the easiest and richest farmland in the world. The summer is hot, but the heat is delightfully invigorating. The winter brings a light snowfall. The cold air is dry and not unpleasant. The general climate is drier than England ... it is a land of peach and apple orchards, full of bubbling trout streams". When faced with such a rosy picture, Frank muses "I wonder why they're giving it away?" This theme of false advertising luring settlers into unimagined hardship recurs in several plays. If Frank's Utopian dreams of a new life in Canada are unrealistic, the writers of the pamphlet contributed to his illusions for more cynical, practical, worldly, materialistic reasons of their own.

While Frank rides the settler train to Winnipeg, he feels more and more isolated as he learns the realities of his new country. Frank's dreams of a farm in Canada with an orchard and rose garden begin to fade. He writes to Lily, "I was told the lakes don't melt until June. I find it hard to believe that this is good country for growing peaches and apples." This is the first of many realities that eventually crush Frank's pamphlet-based dreams. He believed that British settlers were wanted in Canada. When Frank arrives in Winnipeg, however, he finds his accent and clothes elicit disparaging remarks about

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[49] The Historical Atlas of Canada notes the importance to the Canadian Government of "immigrant offices across Europe and the United States to lure both rural and urban workers with visions of land ownership in the Last Best West" (Kerr and Holdsworth 30).

Or as L.W. Brockington, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the CBC, more overtly proclaimed: "North America was intended to be God's Charity to Mankind" – an example of peace in post-war time" (CBK first broadcast 1939).

worthless remittance men[50]. The city is full of signs reading "Men wanted, Englishmen need not apply." The longer he is in Winnipeg, the more isolated he feels.

When Frank does find work, it's as a hired hand: first for an exploitive crook who does not pay, house, or feed him adequately; then for a good-natured, hard-working family man in Saskatchewan named Charlie Baxter. While Frank is working for Charlie, grasshoppers hit Charlie's whole crop, and Frank says, "All we could do was watch and listen to a year's work being totally destroyed." Such destruction highlights the reality that even established farmers are alone in the face of nature's power. Despite such adversity, Charlie still advises Frank to go try for a homestead of his own, saying, "If you don't starve to death in the first three years, you've got a chance." Eventually, Frank does move to his own farm. During the first month on his homestead, Frank finds a sense of peace and pride in solitude reminiscent of Beaupré's vision of his home. Frank muses, "Being out here alone is strange and wonderful in a wild sort of way. The land is never still. Clouds race by and, at night, the stars are so close I could almost jump up and grab one." Soon, though, his letters home take a more dire tone, as the reality of his isolation sets in: "sometimes I worry about my sanity ... I woke up convinced that I could hear you calling me, but it was only that damn wind. This truly is the land God gave to Cain."[51] Even Frank's beloved stars become cold and dead. Frank calls them "white diamond eyes. All around me are silver teardrops dismembered and floating to the ground."

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[50] "Remittance men" – *Concise Oxford Dictionary* definition – "emigrant subsisting on remittances from home" – more specifically, as explained to me by my grandfather, the late Bill McWilliams (I'm paraphrasing), "a man whose relatives back home send him enough money to live on – but not enough money to come home."

[51] "*Land God Gave to Cain, The* - The Land God Gave to Cain, was Jacques Cartier's description of the north shore of the Gulf of St Lawrence, which he first sighted in 1534. Cartier was presumably alluding to Genesis 4, in which Cain, having killed his brother, is condemned to till land that is barren" (*The Canadian Encyclopedia*).

Frank does take some hope, however, for he has finally raised enough money for Lily to sail from England with their baby. Frank, in his last letter to Lily, has come to terms with the fact that the realities of his homestead will never measure up to his original dreams of his family's own little Utopia in Saskatchewan. Of the farm, Frank admits, "It's not very grand, but it will gradually improve. Although I doubt that it will ever have roses around the door. But I do have a cow for fresh milk. No peaches, I'm afraid. It's not much, but it's the best I can do and it's all for you, me, and little Charlie." Lily has named their baby Charlie, after Frank's friend Charlie Baxter.

Unfortunately, Frank will never see his family home at the farm. By the time Lily arrives in Saskatchewan, Frank has died. Charlie Baxter breaks the news to Lily that Frank died two weeks before, of the flu. Isolation was deadly to Frank. Charlie explains: "Being by himself, he didn't have anyone to look after him." Lily grimly resolves to go to the farm. It is the only place she can go. The last line of the play is Lily's, "Just take us to our farm, Charlie." This outcome fits the terms of Atwood's straight-line-versus-the-curve battle. Frank has battled Nature's curve and won. He has imposed his straight line, the farm, onto nature. But in doing so, he destroyed his own life-force. Frank's settlement succeeded. Frank did not. Lily and Charlie Jr. may make a success out of the farm, but the listener is left with the sense that Lily would much rather have been poor in England with Frank than alone on her farm in Canada.

Frank's journey follows Frye's archetypes of the tragic journey in several ways. First, his decisions progressively isolate him from his community/human world. The voyage from England to Winnipeg removed him from his home, family, and country. But it was springtime, the season prevailing in Frye's comic world, and Frank still had

hope. Frank's move from Winnipeg to the crooked Scot's employ took him away from humane society and just treatment. Frank gains a brief respite from some of his isolation at the Baxter's farm where he works for the summer, Frye's last archetypal stop before the seasonal swing to tragedy begins. So far, Frank's journey has been marked by Frank's progressive disillusionment with the Utopian dreams he had upon setting out. This completes Frye's image of the hero withdrawing from the world by homesteading alone in Saskatchewan in the winter. Then, Frank dies of influenza, thus completing Frye's winter/death of the hero archetypal images. But with the spring comes hope. Until he falls ill, Frank's dream of Utopia in the Last Best West sustain him through the winter. The birth of his son Charlie inspires Frank to build a home worthy of his new family. Frank's aspirations and inspirations are the stuff of Frye's comic cycle: birth, spring, and Utopias. Frank's life, however, ends tragically. The fate of his widow and their child remains uncertain as a new winter approaches without the sustaining help of Frank and his dream.

Another observation of note in *The First Step* occurs when Frank claims the Saskatchewan prairie "truly is the land God gave to Cain." This is not the only example of a character making observations about the isolation of prairie landscape in religious or biblical terms. First impressions of the prairie are especially startling when a character has come from another country. The dire descriptions of the landscape and skyscape of the prairies by *The First Step*'s Frank Dobson contrast sharply with the image of a benevolent and heavenly prairie and prairie sky presented by Edouard Beaupré in *The Giant Who Wept*. Beaupré is a child of the prairies and therefore has more idyllic

memories of it. Frank moved to the prairies from a different world and was shocked by the emptiness and isolation, both physical and emotional, he found here.

A woman abandoned on the farm in winter is a powerful image of isolation. Lily is not the only farmwife left alone in this collection of radio plays.[52] The events that lead to another farmwife left alone on the prairie are told in *North of Moose Jaw* (1980, 30:00) by Robert Currie of Moose Jaw. [53] This is another play that deals with the isolation of a settler's life. It is the story of Alec, a restless soul tired of his sod house life on the prairie near Moose Jaw. Near the beginning of the play, Alec and his wife, Jessie, discuss the palpable weight of isolation inside a sod house in winter:

> Alec – It's a long winter.
> Jessie – And I thought it was always women who suffered cabin fever.
> Alec – Well, Jessie, we don't have to worry about you, do we? You're tough.
> Jessie – Sure, tough as nails.
> Alec – I never figured on a sod house. Holed up like a gopher. That's no life for a man.
> Jessie – But it's all right for a woman, isn't it?
> Alec – Come on, Jessie, I never said that. It's no life for anybody.

Despite Alec's claim that this is "no life for anybody," he will leave Jessie alone for that "long winter" – as we will soon see. Like Frank Dobson in *The First Step*, Alec wryly remembers the exaggerated stories that brought him west in the first place: "'The healthiest climate in the world'. They'd say anything to get us out to Western Canada. 'The great fertile plains'. Hah. Those bloody boosters." When Frank Dobson encounters the realities of prairie settling, he buckles down and makes the best of them.[54] However, when reality crushes Alec's hopes of finding his own slice of Utopia, he fumes and plots an escape from sod house life. Alec grumbles to his friends in town, "You

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[52] a familiar image in Saskatchewan fiction as well, especially Sinclair Ross and Ed McCourt.
[53] another play in the *Festival '80* series.
[54] … until he dies.

can't expect a man to come halfway around the world and settle for sod walls." His escape from the farm places Alec squarely into another hair-brained-get-rich-quick-Utopia-seeking-quest. This time, the pipe dream is based upon cattle prices in the Yukon.

Alec's buddy Sam has learned nothing about false reports, either. Sam still believes fantastic reports from the Yukon that "there's gold up there just waiting to be picked up. Nuggets as big as yer thumb!" Alec admonishes Sam for being gullible, saying, "They blow up those stories something awful." But Alec does fall hook, line, and sinker for reports of inflated cattle prices in the Yukon. Alec and his buddy Sam come up with a scheme to drive cattle up to supply the gold rush. After a horribly grueling cattle drive, Alec and friends find out that cattle prices are not nearly as high as reported in the south. They barely get enough money to cover their costs. Alec writes to Jesse that he cannot return home until spring.

Alec has failed to make his easy fortune, but he has avoided a winter alone with his wife in the sod shack. Jessie, however, suffers a terrible loneliness. Alec's thirst for adventure is often associated with his fidelity to Jessie. When Alec frets that he didn't go to South Africa and become a wealthy owner of many diamond mines, Jessie replies, "That's you all right. Ready to chase anything new." When Sam tries to entice Alec into the Yukon cattle-driving scheme, he calls the planned adventure "a fling at Yukon." Alec replies, "I just can't up and leave my wife!" But Sam has an answer to ease Alec's conscience, saying, "so don't run out. You can always come back." Alec had planned on being gone for a month or two. At the end of the play, Jessie realizes that Alec will never be satisfied by staying at home and living the settler's life. Alec is a dreamer and a

drifter. Jessie reads Alec's last letter, which says he can't wait to come back home. But Jessie now knows where Alec's true loyalty lies: with his own thirst for adventure. Jessie declares to herself in her empty sod house, "Yeah, until next time Alec. A whole winter like this. I can't, Alec. I can't go on like this." The wind howls ominously. The play ends. Sam told Alec he could always come back home. That's true. But Sam never promised that Jessie would still be there to welcome Alec home. At the end of the play, Alec is in Frye's tragic cycle facing disillusionment with his dream and the downfall of his scheme. But Alec is hopeful of spring and a triumphant return home, which could move him towards Frye's comic cycle. But Alec is unaware that his marriage is also in danger of dissolving. The irony is that, in Frye's world, the hero's utopia is real and he will achieve it after a period of suffering. Alec's hope is delusional and destructive in this more Atwood-envisioned world. In Frye's terms, Jessie ends the play on a more purely tragic note. She is alone, in winter, in the desert (the prairie in winter) facing the dissolution of her marriage.

Radio plays that deal in *h*istory are plays of everyday struggles. But everyday struggles are often bigger when looked upon through the veil of *h*istory, especially when plays are dealing with the history of settlement. Characters like Mr. Nelson struggle to keep pace with progress, and end up being chewed-up by it. Characters struggle to survive alone in the face of their harsh new world. This struggle can be made all the more difficult when a character first has to reconcile an imagined new country with the actual new country. Characters like Frank Dobson and Alec find their idyllic, hoped-for Utopia is no longer attainable or realistic. Frank chooses to make the best of it. Then he dies, leaving the grimly realistic version of his dream-farm to his widow and his son.

Thus he fulfils Atwood's settler motif of the battle of straight line versus curve. Frank illustrates what happens when "straight line battles curve and wins, but destroys human 'life force' in the process" (Atwood 122). Alec, however, abandons the fight altogether when his first Utopian dream is shattered by reality. He leaves his home and marriage in pursuit of a new, equally fragile dream, thus "straight line deteriorates and the curve takes over again; that is, settlement fails" (Atwood 122). Alec's wife Jessie is resolved to leave Alec before he returns to prepare for whatever ill-fated adventure draws him away again. Without Jessie maintaining their settlement, the sod house homestead, it will crumble.

Radio plays dealing with history are an important part of the radio drama genre. They are used to explore the stories leading up to a people's current place in the world. This is especially useful to countries that were once colonies now living in postcolonial times. Radio plays drawing upon history are also important in exploring communal identity: both as a country and a province. In the 1930s, The Romance of Canada series fulfilled a cheerleading role for a young nation. Proclaiming the virtues of faith in God, King, and Country, the series invoked characters from *H*istory. These explorers, colonizers, and patriots were presented as heroes and trailblazers. The plays, for the most part, focused on these people's moments of greatest triumph.

Twenty years later, radio drama on CBC Saskatchewan was filling a different role, in form and function. In the 1950s, Saskatchewan saw a rise in the prominence of historical, educational drama, as evidenced by Mary Pattison's *Gold is Where you Find It*. Radio drama was an important educational tool. Rather than focusing on any big heroes of bygone days, the play focuses on the march of progress, familiar to a booming post-war and post-depression economy. The museum setting and memories of a normal

man, Mr. Nelson, serve as a memorial to people's progress. The play is an educational tribute to the triumph and tribulations of the little people. The lesson taught is that progress is inevitable, and sometimes it leaves people behind. But as long as future generations can learn about their history and preserve the historic artifacts in the museum, everything will keep getting better. The next generation will thrive because of the hard work of previous generations.

In the 1980s, the history play is re-visited on Saskatchewan radio. But the stories and their treatment are different from those of earlier models designed largely to teach and inspire. While The Romance of Canada often focus on the triumphs of a Hero's life, more recent *H*istory plays focus on the downfall of the hero, or the futility of the hero's death. Sukanen dies as a figure of scorn, his dream unfulfilled, because no one would believe in him enough to let him escape to his homeland. Beaupré dies in a freak show. He wants, even after he dies, to earn money to send home to his impoverished family. But his earnings never reach them. The power of the drama lies in the tension between the mythic underpinnings of the story which celebrate the hero and his journey and the surface reality of destructive, dehumanizing greed that points at the meaninglessness of Beaupré's death.

In the case of *h*istory plays, the playwrights still enjoy the freedom to tell the stories of fictional characters set before a historical backdrop but this freedom is often used to tell darker, lonelier stories. Settlers in these plays are still held up as examples of hard work and sacrifice. However, now the question arises of whether or not such human sacrifices are worth the social gain. Deceived or deluded settlers press west in search of their utopian dreams and are disappointed. *The First Step*'s Frank Dobson cannot grow

orchards in Saskatchewan; *North of Moose Jaw*'s Alec can't get rich quick in his sod house in the middle of winter. When Atwood's battle between straight-line (man or settler) and curve rages, straight-line can only expect to win a pyrrhic victory. This agricultural struggle and failure would ring true to a Saskatchewan listener within an economy beginning to feel the effects of plummeting grain prices after the relative boom of the 1970s. Listeners could draw several positive experiences from these stories: assurance in the resiliency of their community which has survived hard times in the past; relief from feeling alone or isolated with feelings of doubt and despair over their future; even some very old-fashioned Aristotelian catharsis.

Throughout most of these plays, there are persistent themes of isolation. This isolation can be cultural. Those living outside of the dominant culture are isolated, like Piapot in his jail cell, Beaupré in the human zoo, and Sukanen within the mental hospital. The isolation can be at the hands of progress, like Mr. Nelson, who was bumped out of his threshing-crew dream-career too early and never could find a place in the world once progress left him behind. The prairie landscape and climate often serve as sources of isolation. Settlers like Frank Dobson find themselves alone in a vast new place. Frank's initial attraction to the initial beauty of the landscape turns to feelings of despair and desolation as he faces his first winter alone on the prairie. In *North of Moose Jaw*, Alec goes adventuring to avoid the prairie winter. Jessie, Alec's wife, decides she cannot remain in a marriage where her husband abandons her to face the prairie winter alone in their sod house. Jessie's physical isolation heightens her psychological isolation within her marriage.

Nature is a dynamic, isolating force in many Saskatchewan radio plays. The physical isolation of landscape and climate often parallels, or exacerbates psychological isolation of characters. Such images of isolation are not limited to plays dealing with Saskatchewan history. In the following chapter, James Quandt's radio plays will be explored for similar themes of the land and physical isolation, woman and nature, and the tragic images associated with winter. The howling wind, the freezing cold, and the empty space parallel the wounded emotional self, the frozen heart, and the broken spirit.

CHAPTER TWO

LANDSCAPE: QUANDT AND ISOLATION

The plays of James Quandt are filled with images of ice and snow, death, and loneliness.[55] However, the most powerful elements of these plays are space and isolation. Quandt's plays help to further explore the prevalence of the themes of isolation appearing throughout Saskatchewan radio plays written after 1980. Quandt is not writing in a historic mode. His plays are set well after the era of settlement that largely informed the history plays of the previous chapter. Despite the update in setting, familiar images arise, such as Frye's tragic archetypes of the seasonal cycles of setting, climate, isolation, and death; Atwood's thoughts on nature-the-monster and nature-as-woman; and Burke's observations on writings from "frozen steppes" and the poignancy of the image of Mother Wheat, Saskatchewan's early agrarian economy, changing or dying over the past 25 years.[56]

Such insights will provide a useful framework for exploring physical and mental geography in this chapter. Quandt often uses physical settings, or landscape, to highlight a character's mental landscape, or mindscape. Within these plays, both landscape and its mental reflection, mindscape, are important. Landscape can refer to the sum of the earth, trees, rocks and animals that surround a character. Mindscape can refer to the character's state of mind as it has been influenced by interaction with other characters as well as

[55] Quandt, a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, is a Canadian film critic of note who now works at Cinematheque Ontario. He was the founding Director of Cinematheque Ontario between 1990 and 1997 and has since served as Senior Programmer. Awards: the Special Prize for Arts and Culture from The Japan Foundation, the Chevalier des Arts et Letters from the French government, a Special Citation from the American National Society of Film Critics, and the Clyde Gilmour Life Achievement Award from the Toronto Film Critics Association. (News release, Toronto – Cinematheque Ontario 10/14/04.) <http://www.e.bell.ca/filmfest/cinematheque/about_news_sub.asp?pressID=131>

[56] See introduction.

interaction with the natural, physical landscape. Mindscape can also be a construct of the character based on his or her experiences. Of specific interest are the following three plays by James Quandt: *Arctic Landscapes*, broadcast in February, 1980; *The Sea*, broadcast in November, 1980; and *The Silence*, broadcast in August, 1985.

The Plays

Quandt's *Arctic Landscapes* aired on Arts à la Carte in February 1980 (28:00). The play fits well into Burke's quintessential motif of Saskatchewan writing. The play follows two characters as they cope with death in a Saskatchewan winter. The narration flows back and forth between the thoughts of two characters, a man and woman. The form creates the audio "feel" of a pair of monologues. It also sets up a sense of isolation with two voices side by side, but always alone. The desolate snowscape, a "desert" of sorts, and the isolated characters are the stuff of Frye's tragic mode. The only connection that these two characters seem to have is they have both been touched by situations similar to Atwood's Death by Nature motif. Quandt utilizes both drowning and freezing as threats to human life, drowning and freezing being "the Canadian author's favourite methods for dispatching his victims" (Atwood, 55).

The play opens with a man who is seeking refuge under his snowmobile. The machine has a leaking gas tank that has drained, leaving the man stranded far away from the camp out of which he is working. The camp is his community. As the man waits to be rescued, he fears he will freeze to death alone. Freezing is, as Atwood points out, the Canadian prose writer's choice for "death by nature". The apparently doomed man muses on death and his insignificance before it. To him, death is "Like being in a vacuum," or "Like being pressed into nothingness." The man's feelings of insignificance

compound as he gets colder. He observes that, "the act of dying is entirely involuntary. There is no will in it." In *Arctic Landscapes*, death is compared to sleep. Even the man's senses begin to desert him until only his sense of smell keeps him alive. He is brought back to consciousness by the smell of gasoline that has spilled from his punctured gas tank. This gas flows "like blood over the snow." The man's snowmobile becomes a once-living thing that has died and left him alone. Eventually, the man is found and rescued by his co-workers. Or, in terms of Frye's hero, he is resurrected from the edge of death, offering the hope of lifting his plotline past the tragic archetype. His isolation is ended, and he is saved by his community. The ending reinforces the idea that, without a community to support him, nature would have been the death of this man who blundered into it unprepared.

In the second monologue, a woman recalls her son tobogganing onto thin ice and drowning. Death becomes a void again as she describes her son sinking into the water "like a figure on a piece of paper being slowly erased." Her son wore a yellow snowsuit. The colour yellow becomes a colour of death. She feels left "alone with yellow dreams." She tells of how her husband found his grandfather dead in the garage with a yellow scarf stuffed into the tailpipe of his car. If gasoline represents life to the man freezing with his snowmobile, gasoline's exhaust becomes an image of death to the woman and her husband. The smell of gasoline keeps the freezing man aware he is still alive, but the mourning mother has a different, more emotional tie keeping her aware. She says, "hurt makes me know I'm here." The woman's loneliness is not only a longing for her lost son. She says grief has emptied her and driven her away from her husband, who "cannot put his arms around the shell I carry." Insomnia fuels her loneliness. In contrast to the man

under his snowmobile, who is trying desperately to stay awake, this mournful woman longs for sleep. The listener is left wondering whether or not the woman is actually contemplating suicide.

The sense of isolation is heightened by the fact that it is never made clear what connection, if any, the two characters share. As the woman is left wallowing in grief, the man is rescued and brought back in from the cold. Their only connection seems to be their brushes with death and the associated loneliness. Where these musings on death contrast each other is of interest. The man is under physical threat of death; he is physically stranded away from his community and thus may freeze to death. His survival depends upon being found and moved to a warmer, safer place. The woman, however, is facing a psychological threat of death. The weight of the death of her child pushes her farther into a pool of her own grief, where she may also "drown" in a way. She could be rescued, also, but her rescue depends upon someone in her circle of friends or family, i.e. her community, discovering her emotional pain and taking action to relieve it, which could prove harder to accomplish. The man's community needs only to realize that he is missing, follow his snowmobile tracks, and get him to shelter before he freezes. There is an obvious, physical trail for them to follow. The woman, however, leaves no obvious physical trail for potential rescuers to follow. Like Frye's ironic heroine, she withdraws from the world when only the world can save her. She exists day-to-day in society, but the threat to her continues unless her pain is uncovered by someone who cares enough to help her through it. She needs community to be emotionally supported, while the man needs community to be physically supported.

Physical and emotional danger also surface in Quandt's radio play *The Silence* (1985, 30:00). *The Silence* is the story of an interview with Frau Klause, an older German widow who lives on her dead husband's farm in Alberta. Franz, Frau Klause's husband, fell and injured himself in the farmyard. Unable to reach safety on his own, he froze to death in the farmyard, within sight of the kitchen window. Death by Nature has struck again, via freezing. After Franz's death, it became public that he was a German SS officer guilty of war crimes. The interviewer is a male reporter who is writing a story about Franz. He wants Frau Klause to tell him about her husband. The play's title refers to its explorations of both the literal definition of silence, absence of sound, and silence as meaning what people choose to keep hidden. Frau Klause remembers the silence of her neighbourhood as people disappeared in Nazi-occupied Europe. She learned the value of silence after the disappearance of her parents in Germany. She recalls, "I soon found that to speak certain words, certain questions, were dangerous. It is a useful thing, you know, to learn to keep silent." After moving to Alberta, she observed the silence of neighbours: "they might have been suspicious [of Franz's past] but, like me, they kept it to themselves." In this community, silence is valued.

After the reporter leaves, Frau Klause breaks her silence with the listener in the form of a monologue. Frau Klause reveals that Franz physically and emotionally tortured her for years after they moved to Canada. But even after Franz dies, Frau Klause never speaks of this torture to the reporter or anyone else, the listener assumes. This silence also fits with Atwood's assertation that many women in Canadian literature are silent and stoic. When asked if she ever feared her husband, Frau Klause replies, "No, never. What was there to be afraid of? He was (deep breath) the man I married. No. I was afraid of

other things but never of Franz. Falling and freezing to death in the fields, but no, never of him." She cites this fear of the fields again when remembering her first shock of the open and isolated nature of their farm: "I thought I would be swallowed up by the space. I often thought I would run away. But then, I would look out into the fields and it was open on all sides, which made it harder." Frau Klause cited her fear of the landscape as her reason for planning an escape. Later, however, it becomes apparent that her greatest fear was of her husband. His cruelty made him even more inhospitable, dangerous, and terrifying than the physical landscape around their farm.

The reporter presses Frau Klause about what she knew of her husband's past. Frau Klause only acknowledges that she thought Franz was just a soldier. The reporter asks if she misses Franz. Her reply sounds cold. She says, "I never miss anything. It is here. It is gone. There is always more work to do." She appears unmoved by her husband's death.

An unexpected thunderstorm forces the reporter to stay at the farmhouse overnight. The dirt road becomes too muddy to drive over, creating another layer of physical isolation. Frau Klause even makes light reference to her husband's past reputation:

> Reporter - A gothic nightmare. Trapped in a deserted farmhouse…
> Klause - … with a crazy woman. The butcher's wife who has learned every trick from her husband. That you could sell to, what is the name of that paper?
> Reporter - *The National Enquirer*
> Klause - Franz's favourite paper, by the way.

Klause is determined to keep the truth of her past buried. Only the listener is privy to the real story through Klause's opening and closing monologues. Both monologues are heard over a German voice, as if we are party to a translation of Frau Klause's thoughts.

She begins the play with the story of how Franz removed her from her home in Germany (spilling her potatoes) and brought her to Canada:

> Silence begins as a small dead spot. My mother's laugh. Frau Hertzaug? Kept her window open every night and played the piano and then she too was gone and we just listened to the rain. There was a net bag of potatoes on the table and Franz came into the room and said to hurry up and pack and I picked the potatoes up but he grabbed them out of my hand. The net ripped and the potatoes rolled into the corners of the room. They didn't make a sound.
>
> At first, I thought this is such a silent place. But listen, there is no silence. When you know that it will be broken, it is no longer silence. You spend all your time waiting for it to break.

A silence breaks for Frau Klause the day Franz dies. Soon, it is replaced by a different kind of silence. The reporter questions Frau Klause regarding the police's interest in how she did not hear her husband call out for help as he was freezing to death near the house. She claims she had the radio on and she was working in the other side of the house. After the reporter leaves, however, the full story is revealed to the listener. She finds the silence of her prairie farmhouse different without her husband:

> No, not the same silence. Broken, but stitched up slowly around me a thousand cries, a million. Theirs, the ones he murdered, and mine. My spine snapping under his boot. Bones twisting in their sockets. Eyes pressed into the soft convolutions of my brain. Skin on my knees on the stairs. The tattoo he did not know how to give. First with the needle, then with the knitting needle. Botched. I was the continuation of his ecstasy. And his cries, too. Thrown up into a vast cube of white sky, while I peeled potatoes at the kitchen window. Three potatoes. Only enough for me. The cries cancel each other out. This is the silence I have waited for.

She watched her husband die alone in the snow. Her only reaction was to peel fewer potatoes. Years of torture have frozen Frau Klause to Franz. Psychologically, she is unable to help him. Atwood's Death by Nature could technically stand, but nature is more of an instrument used by Frau Klause to liberate herself than it is a cruel or indifferent force. After Franz's death, she could be free of his psychopathic rages. She

used to fear silence because of how her husband would end it: “You spend all your time waiting for it to break.” Now the silence of her isolation is something she can escape into. For Frau Klause, silence becomes a freedom of sorts. Images of isolation haunt the mind long after the play is finished: the abused farm wife, trapped in her isolated farmhouse by her deranged Nazi husband; Franz screaming for help as he freezes to death within sight of his house; and finally a woman freed of the hell of her abusive husband living in self-imposed exile in the house where she lived that hell.

Frau Klause’s situation is somewhat different from that of the woman in *Arctic Landscapes.* Where the woman uses her emotional burdens to threaten herself, Frau Klause focuses all of her hatred directly upon Franz. Both women reveal their deepest secrets and fears in monologue form. Only the listener learns of their pain. To other characters, the listener assumes, both women appear to stoically press on with their lives. The woman presses on in sorrow and grief; Frau Klause presses on by concealing her past pain and the (in)action she took to end it. Both women have no children. The woman tragically lost hers; Frau Klause and Franz never had any. This silent, childless, tortured pair of women appear to fit Atwood’s image of one type of woman in Canadian fiction.

The freezing death of Franz and the rescue from a freezing death of the man in *Arctic Landscapes* highlight the importance of community to survival. The man is saved from physical danger by a community that cared enough to risk coming out into the freezing cold wilderness to rescue him. Franz’s only community on the farm was his wife. By torturing her, he removed himself from her sympathy. Franz, according to his

community, did not even warrant a rescue mission from within his own farmyard. The safety of community and danger of isolation are apparent in both of these plays.

The stark and frozen landscapes of Quandt's *Arctic Landscapes* and *The Silence* are replaced by a wetter and warmer, but no more inviting, landscape in his radio play *The Sea* (Nov. 1980, 16:00). In form, the play is a collection of three monologues that are heard one after the other, unlike the two interwoven voices of *Arctic Landscapes*. Again, the separation of voices heightens the sense of isolation. The play is about a family isolated in several ways: they are on vacation and thus they are away from their home; and they are isolated from each other, both physically and emotionally. The play features a mother, her son, and his wife, Nora, on vacation at the seashore. The story sweeps the listener out to sea because of the position of the characters and the order in which they are heard. First to tell her story is the Mother, seated in the house. Next we hear her son on the seashore. The third and final monologue comes from Nora swimming in the sea. The three characters struggle with how their lives are intertwined. Throughout the play, we hear the waves breaking on the shore, which conjures up images of the ocean – providing another of Frye's tragic archetypal images of the unformed world, the sea (Bate 608).

The two women, the old mother and young Nora, fill several roles or archetypes as defined by Frye and Atwood. Nora is an example both of Frye's isolated hero/heroine and of Atwood's Rapunzel figure: the young, fertile woman imprisoned by a crone-guardian while she waits for a shallow hero to rescue her (Survival 209). To this, Atwood adds a Canadian twist:

> What is Canadian about the local exemplars of the Rapunzel figure is their difficulty in communicating, or even acknowledging, their

> fears and hatreds; they walk around with mouths like clenched fists… In fact, in Canada *Rapunzel and the tower are the same.* These heroines have internalized the values of their culture to such an extent that they have become their own prisons (Atwood 209).

Nora shares some of these Canadian Rapunzel qualities. The mother, tough, silent, and miserable, is reminiscent of Atwood's earlier description of Canlit women. Between these two strong women is a rather insignificant man, Nora's husband and the old woman's son.

The first monologue is delivered by the mother from the sea-side house. She hates this vacation. If Nora is a Rapunzel figure, then the old woman is also entrapped in this vacation. It is an annual torture, as the old woman says, "every year this holiday by the sea. Seagulls screaming into your brain, crust of salt in your hair, the blank face of the sea, steel-grey. The waves booming and crashing relentlessly until you think your head will split open. And no matter how cold it is she goes swimming. Her red bathing suit like a blood-stain." It becomes clear that the mother is angrier at her daughter-in-law than with the vacation. She repeats "her red bathing suit clinging to her so you can see everything." The mother is jealous of this young woman and is afraid of Nora's youth and strength, fearing, "She will destroy us with her hard body." There also is a sense of resentment over losing her son to Nora. The old woman asks, "When would I learn that my children existed apart from me, that when they were taken from my womb they were no longer me?" Here, the sense of security and safety of the womb takes on a different tone. The womb becomes a way in which the mother has ultimate control over her child's life, which evokes Atwood's Rapunzel comparison. The old woman would control Nora, if she could, in order to better control her son. The old woman also feels isolated even though she lives with the pair, if not of her own choosing. She confesses, "I hate living

there, but I can't stay by myself. I am afraid I will be swallowed up by the silence." The old woman echoes Frau Klause's musings on space in *The Silence*. Frau Klause says, "I thought I would be swallowed up by the space." While Frau Klause desires silence and solitude, the old woman in *The Sea* longs for meaningful communication, as do the two other characters. This desire to communicate is usually centred in an inability to converse with Nora. To the old woman, it could be a division fostered partly by a gap in education. The old woman complains of Nora using "words I cannot understand."

The second monologue takes the listener out of the house and onto the beach. Here the son is watching his wife, Nora, swimming. She seems very small to him, "Like a little flag out there on the sea." He puzzles over how Nora can seem so distant; even when she "surrounds me with her hard, sweet skin it always seems I'm looking at her from a distance." The word "hard" is used repeatedly when describing Nora, showing just how unapproachable she appears to her husband and mother-in-law. That Nora is described as having "hard sweet skin" also juxtaposes the young man's view of his mother, whom he sees as sitting in the house "hating us all ... her face, all dried up like crumpled paper." The separation in the play is not only along blood lines, i.e. the woman who married into the family not being accepted easily, but it is also a separation between youth and age.

The rift between Nora and her husband is undeniable and an inability to communicate is a major cause of it. Nora's husband claims she "uses her sentences, hard, sharp, and crusted like weapons." Now even Nora's words are "hard." Nora leaves behind her notebook, which her husband reads in hopes of finding some clue to reaching her, but he "can't understand what she writes, the clues are ciphers, hieroglyphics." Thus

language becomes a source of division. Nora's separation from her husband is highlighted by his mantra-like repeated phrase, "if she drowns, I won't be able to save her." That it is repeated makes it sound like a prayer. But just what outcome he could be praying for is picked up in the third monologue.

In the final monologue of the play, the listener hears Nora's thoughts as she is swimming in the sea. The house and shore have been depicted as lonely, hard landscapes. Nora describes the sea as a much warmer, nurturing 'scape. She compares it to "amniotic fluid", and feels she is "part of the sea." Again, the womb is depicted as isolation from others, but a safe, warm and nurturing isolation.

Contrasting this nurturing and female depiction of the sea, classic Freudian imagery is dredged up when Nora names the lighthouse the "eternal male element." She puts a darker spin on her husband's thought as she wonders, "can they see me? Are they desperately afraid I might drown? Do they secretly wish it?" Nora is also aware of how the others see her, asking, "What of Nora? She is the hard one, the impenetrable one." The collection of words surrounding Nora ("hard", "impenetrable", "sharp", "crusted") and her phallic description of the lighthouse leads me to believe that Quandt was setting up Nora as a Freudian phallic character who is, "reckless, resolute, self-assured, and narcissistic, excessively vain and proud... afraid or incapable of close love" (Stevenson). The language Quandt uses to describe Nora is too specific to be coincidental, and thus Freudian imagery emerges like some barnacle-encrusted Kraken to dominate the characterization of Nora.

Nora's inability to discuss her problems and pain is shared by the other two characters in the play. Rather than just tell her husband what hurts, she "codifies her pain

and leaves it for her husband to read and puzzle over." Thus Nora becomes Atwood's Canadian Rapunzel, trapped by her own inscrutability. Nora's "hard" exterior becomes the walls of her own tower. When the play ends, the listener is left with the feeling that these three souls will be forever alone, even though they live together. Anger, pain, and suffering will not allow them to disperse the fog of misunderstanding that engulfs them.

These three plays are studies of characters' physical and psychological landscapes. Death by Nature is possible, but avoidable if one has a community able, and willing, to act in averting tragedy. In *Arctic Landscapes* the two characters are in peril. The man faces a physical threat to his life: Death by Nature (freezing). But he is saved by his community. His danger was known and physically solvable. The woman is threatened by a *psychological* danger to her life that she seems incapable of signaling to others. This danger is physically unapparent, unknown by and hidden from her community. She is under threat with no sign that anyone is coming to psychologically save her.

In *The Silence*, there was, until recently, a community of two. Frau Klause becomes her own community after the death of her husband, Franz. He was a threat to his community (Frau Klause), and therefore he was not saved from the physical threat of freezing, Death by Nature. By not acting to relieve the physical threat to his life, she frees herself from the psychological and physical threat that Franz presents to her.

Frau Klause's impressions of her physical landscape are more consistent with the bleak and inhospitable views expressed by *The First Step*'s Frank Dobson, another settler, than they are of the healing and caring prairie as remembered by Edouard Beaupré in *The Giant Who Wept*. Frau Klause becomes another woman alone on the farm in

winter. She joins other lonely winter-bound women like *The First Step*'s Lily and Jessie of *North of Moose Jaw* to develop a powerful collage of isolation. Their isolation is both physical (they are alone on the farm) and emotional (their husbands are gone or dead). Also dead is any dream of building a happy and successful life in their new country.

The Sea focuses on psychological threats or pain. The play is set near water, an element Atwood compares to the unconscious, and Frye to the unformed world. The three characters in *The Sea* are all troubled souls who keep silent and therefore cannot help each other. They are a community of three that refuse to see each other's pain. While not all contemporary Saskatchewan radio dramas deal in such dark, cold fare, Quandt's radio plays feature recurring themes of isolation, both physical and emotional, that run through other works focusing on present day as well as historical Saskatchewan.

The lesson of the plays explored in the last two chapters is that community and communication are vital to health and survival. Sukanen's spirit broke when his community turned on him in both *Dustship Glory* and *The Shipbuilder*. Beaupre, in *The Giant Who Wept,* felt that his home and home landscape could heal him, even if they were never given the chance. In the beginning of *And Did the Dog See This?*, Piapot journeyed from being without community, his band having died when he was a baby to leading his own, strong community; then struggling to keep it strong in the face of the advancing settler horde. His determination to preserve such traditions as the Sun Dance speaks to his hope for the future of his people, though his imprisonment by an unsympathetic European Canadian bureaucracy suggests that it is, at best, hope deferred. His grandson, though not physically confined in the same way, continues to struggle with his cultural isolation in the Presbyterian Industrial School that the bureaucrats view as his

best hope for the future. The decline and death of rural, farming communities in Saskatchewan fuels interest in stories of the settlers trying, and often failing: Mr. Nelson in *Gold is Where You Find It*, Frank Dobson of *The First Step*, Alec and Jessie of *North of Moose Jaw*. When the community fails, the individual cannot succeed. This is especially true when the health of an individual is at stake, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter, *Bodyscape*.

CHAPTER THREE

BODYSCAPE: ISOLATION, HEALTH, AND THE WOMAN'S VOICE

This chapter will focus on isolation, medical issues, and why women playwrights tell these stories. The plays studied explore the concerns surrounding ailments and treatments, isolation and community, and access to healthcare in rural and urban Saskatchewan. Given the pride most Saskatchewan residents take in their province's reputation as being the birthplace of Canadian Medicare, it is not surprising that medicine is a recurring topic in this cross-section of Saskatchewan radio dramas. Plays with healthcare-related themes or settings also provide ample ground for continuing to explore themes of isolation. Dramatic treatments of patients interacting with doctors, patients in hospitals, patients receiving medical diagnoses and/or treatment are prevalent. Some plays deal with the tensions that arise when patients, or potential patients, live in rural areas and are thus isolated from easier access to professional medical care found in cities. Concerns are also raised about paternalistic medical culture and its treatment of immigrants and women in pioneer-era Saskatchewan. The physical and emotional isolation experienced by characters who encounter mental health professionals will be explored. Some characters are isolated because of their illness (mental or physical) and some are isolated because of the treatment they seek (or are forced to seek) to ease their affliction.

Most of the plays in this collection that deal with themes of health and healthcare are written by women. To frame a discussion of women, health and care, I want to draw on Carol Gilligan's observations on women's voices and the ethics of

care. Writing from a background in psychology, Gilligan calls for a necessary shift of thought within philosophy and social theory. Gilligan stresses the importance of changing the voice of discourse from the divisions of patriarchy, built on disconnection and self betterment, to a more unifying, relational approach to discourse. Gilligan argues that "on a theoretical and political level, on a personal and psychological level, this change in voice seemed essential. The existing paradigm was patriarchal; it was built upon a disconnection from women which became part of the psychology of women and men" (121).

Gilligan is very specific when defining the difference between a feminine ethic of care and a feminist ethic of care. The feminine ethic, to Gilligan, is defined by self-sacrifice and relationships. It is

> an ethic of the relational world as that world appears within a patriarchal social order: that is, as a world apart, separated politically and psychologically from a realm of individual autonomy and freedom which is the realm of justice and contractual obligation. (122)

This feminine ethic of care, Gillian argues, is distinct from the feminist ethic of care, which is defined by relational interaction, because

> A feminist ethic of care begins with connection, theorized as primary and seen as fundamental in human life. People live in connection with one another; human lives are interwoven in a myriad of subtle and not so subtle ways. A feminist ethic of care reveals the disconnections in a feminine ethic of care as problems of relationship. (122)

Such an outlook is different from the problematic, disconnected, paternal notion of the "separate self" which, according to Gilligan, is represented by

> the rational man, acting out of relationship with the inner and outer world. Such autonomy, rather than being the bedrock for solving psychological and moral problems itself becomes the problem, signifying a disconnection from emotions and a blindness to

> relationships which set the stage for psychological and political trouble. (122)

Gilligan stresses the importance of highlighting "women's relationship to this societal and cultural transformation because the history of this relationship is in danger of being buried" because "a patriarchal social order depends for its regeneration on a disconnection from women" (123). When women's voices are heard, a more relational approach to decision-making follows. When they are buried, the patriarchal norm is re-enforced.

Further to the discussion of women's voices, Burke also provides insight into the largely personal nature of what women write about in radio drama:

> Shortest form: Loss. Women write about loss.
> Slightly longer: Radio is a very quiet genre - a genre that lends itself to the introspective monologue, and musings on secrets. Women playwrights use the silence inside the radio play to make audible the secret aches and fears of their hearts, the stuff they hide from their kids, husbands, and even their friends - the dirt that gets swept under their psychic rugs.
> They write plays about the fear of being old and alone. The nightmare of losing a child. The ordinary loss of looking back at roads not taken. And they reflect on loves they regret, and can't help.

These fears of loss and loneliness can be alleviated by a caring community, or relational society.

The advancement of social reforms is an important part of the Saskatchewan myth. Women have always been at the forefront of healthcare debates. The desire to provide better healthcare was one of the core issues of the women's suffrage movement in Saskatchewan. Women like Violet McNaughton (1879-1968) and their fight for a

voice in Saskatchewan's governing are remembered in *To Do and Endure* by Gertrude Story.[57]

The play, written for the history series *Festival '80 Radio Theatre*, tells the story of Violet McNaughton, Patience Strong, and Norma McGarrity. These three women fought for women's suffrage in Saskatchewan in 1916. The women are hoping that the ability to vote will raise the profile of "women's concerns" such as access to healthcare, especially in rural areas.[58] The women also seek relief from oppressive and dismissive property laws and dower laws.[59] The women go head-to-head with then-Saskatchewan Premier Walter Scott over women's suffrage. Two weeks after Manitoba women win the right to vote provincially, the Saskatchewan government reluctantly follows suit.[60]

The characters in *To Do and Endure* speak about the political powerlessness of their situation as women within the existing social, political, and educational structures. Patience Strong declares, "We women have got no way to help ourselves and that's God's own truth." According to Patience, the Homemakers' Clubs stressed only education, not politics, because they were operated by the university and funded by the government. Patience dismisses the clubs as merely "a political sugar-tit to keep women quiet." This exemplifies Gilligan's feminine ethic of care; the women are expected to nurture and heal, but do so quietly. Even when Violet McNaughton does

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[57] Gertrude E. Story (b. 1929): Well-known Saskatchewan writer and broadcaster. Besides radio drama, Story has written fiction (for adult and children), non-fiction, and poetry. Story's publications include major publications include: *After Sixty: Going Home; Black Swan; Counting Two; How to Saw Wood With An Angel; It Never Pays To Laugh Too Much; and The Last House on Main Street*.

[58] McNaughton spoke often to such issues. She is quoted in the 29 December 1917 edition of the *Regina Leader* as saying "it is more dangerous to be a baby in Canada than a soldier in the trenches. We believe that each local association has a duty to the children of the community and the women should give special attention to this matter."

[59] Geo. F. Stirling or the *Publicity Department, United Farmers of Canada*, claimed in 1927 that "The Dower Law requiring the wife's signature before the husband can sell the homestead, was gained at the insistence of the [Grain Grower's] Association" (Stirling, 17).

[60] Manitoba officially granted women the right to vote on January 27, 1916, while Saskatchewan followed suit on February 14, 1916.

manage to impress Premier Scott with her determination and knowledge, he compliments her and re-enforces his paternalistic stance saying, "Pity, we could have used the likes of a man like you in the legislature."

While "the vote" is eventually won, the final note on the struggle for women's suffrage seems to ring more ironically than inspirationally, with its comment that: "[the Saskatchewan women's suffrage campaign]'s successful outcome was proof once again … that progress towards equal justice for all thrives remarkably well in the frontier soil of Saskatchewan." Again, the women in the play refer to Manitoba's decision to allow women to vote as the pivotal event of their struggle; Saskatchewan would *have* to follow Manitoba's precedent. While "progress towards equal justice for all thrives remarkably well in the frontier soil of Saskatchewan" it was the Manitoba government that tilled the first row.

The voice of women on the farm, in relation to the economics of farm wills and estates, and access to health care are also at issue in *Reunion* by Kim Dales and Roy Morrissey (33:00).[61] The issues are similar, but the play is set in the then-present day of the 1980s. This suggests that many of the issues of *To Do And Endure* are still of concern. In *Reunion*, three siblings meet after their father's funeral to discuss his estate. Doug, the eldest son, is bitter at not being named in the will, despite having already gained his inheritance in the form of a house, bought by the father for Doug and his pregnant girlfriend. The middle child, Billy, has stayed on the farm and hopes to continue to work it. He has inherited all but the home quarter, which was left to his mom. Tracy, the only daughter, is the youngest child. She has become a lawyer and moved to Toronto. Discussion turns to whether their mom should stay on the farm or

[61] Kim Dales appears in the bibliography as Kim Morrissey.

move to a house or an apartment in town. The children's worries include distance, weather, and the state of the roads: "the farm's 15 miles from the nearest hospital. That's half an hour on these roads, more in the winter – if she can get out at all. Who knows what could happen?"

On one level, her family's concern over her health reflects their valuing of her as the family's quiet, nurturing force working within the paternal order. Yet, significantly, this discussion happens without their mother being present. Mom's voice is excluded from decision-making. This play does not show a great advancement of the farmwife becoming an equal participant in financial decisions or even in her own life. It is her daughter, Tracy, who eventually speaks up for her mother. In doing so, Tracy reveals the complicated feelings that she has been dealing with in terms of the reality of her family and the images of farm-women prevalent in the minds of her big-city friends as follows:

> You know, when I talk about the farm, and mom, my friends envy me. They see her as the new type of woman: self sufficient, straightforward, sharing the work of the farm. They envy me and I wish I were more like her. When I'm here, I don't see her strength. All I see is a life wasted spent cooking and cleaning and fetching for Dad half the time and being lied to and cheated and shouted at the other half. I try not to hate her for letting you and Doug take over where Dad left off because you love her. I want her to be happy, to be strong. To be the sort of person she was supposed to be. Not just old Mom, not just the thing you kick whenever the dog isn't convenient, or shout at because the potatoes are burnt. She has the right to make her own decisions, to be happy just once in her life. Do you want to know the truth? I didn't come here for Dad's funeral. I came here for Mom.

Tracy is concerned about her mother. Doug and Billy are more concerned about the estate. If a woman's relational voice is to be made part of the patriarchal order, i.e. the

dead father and his two sons, then Tracy will have to provide it. Tracy is at a disadvantage in adding this voice, as she is isolated from the situation by distance.

While most Saskatchewan residents are willing to take collective credit for being "the guys who got Medicare going," Tommy Douglas is usually the figure from Saskatchewan's history who is invoked when history and healthcare are discussed in this province. T. C. (Tommy) Douglas (1904-1986) was the Baptist preacher turned politician who was the Member of Parliament for Weyburn between 1935 and 1944 as a member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, the CCF (which would later become the New Democratic Party, or NDP). Douglas then came back to lead the Saskatchewan CCF to victory in the provincial election of 1944. During his tenure as premier, the CCF government began implementation of universal provincial healthcare. He would later help the Federal Government implement a National Medicare program in 1967.[62]

It may seem odd, then, that only one play dealing with Douglas was discovered in this collection: *Auld Acquaintance* by Kim Dales and Roy Morrissey. It was epic in length, airing as ten episodes on Ambience from July 12 through September 13 in 1986 (10 episodes ranging from 11:00 to 17:00). Douglas is not the main character of the play, but his voice informs it. Douglas is heard only through audio clips from his speeches[63]. The play is an exploration of Douglas through the eyes, or ears, of an ideological opponent; a very different exploration of *H*istory than is seen in, for

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[62] Highlighting the present importance of Medicare to Canadians (or, at least Canadian CBC viewers): In 2004, Douglas won the CBC Television's national popularity contest, *The Greatest Canadian*.
CBC Archives: *Medicare*, <http://archives.cbc.ca/IDD-1-73-90/politics_economy/medicare/>
CBC Greatest Canadian Contest nominees
<http://www.cbc.ca/greatest/top_ten/nominee/douglas-tommy.html>

[63] The archival audio of Douglas's speeches were copied from collections of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, Birdsong Films, and the NDP.

example, in The Romance of Canada series. It is the story of a sick old man, Barr, trying to relive his glory days and re-fight old political fights. The play's introduction on CBC Saskatchewan's Ambience explained further:

> The drama follows the struggles of retired journalist OJ Barr who is writing a book about Douglas. From the 1930s to the 1970s Barr worked for a newspaper that was ideologically opposed to Douglas's politics. Barr shared the newspaper's sentiments, but at the same time was fascinated by this highly successful and engaging politician. Barr finds that his anxieties about Douglas's politics, first encountered during his newspaper days, are rekindled as he attempts to write this book. (R-9898 files)

These observations are proven during the play's ten episodes. The editorial direction of Barr's newspaper is summed up in a conversation Barr has with his editor. Barr tries to quote Douglas, with the lead in that Douglas "said". Barr's editor reminds him that, in this newspaper, "Liberals *state*, P.C.'s *say*, and N.D.P.'s *allege*". Barr explains his own fascination with Tommy as "Barr on Douglas – "I like him, I don't like what he stands for" but that "the little bugger was witty." Barr eventually adopts a line from one of Douglas's speeches as a rallying cry when he is facing operations and other treatments in the hospital. The line is a punch line of a joke Douglas told once, in which an old man says: "I don't have any enemies in all the world. I've outlived the bastards."

Barr's story fits well into this exploration of healthcare and isolation in Saskatchewan. Barr is dying as he is trying to write his book. His life is unraveling as he tries to knit together his story about Douglas. Barr is going through old tapes of Tommy Douglas's speeches, on a wide range of topics, including the following: capital punishment; creating world peace by solving world hunger; Credit Unions; the Wheat Pool; and the Wheat Board. Only one speech centres on healthcare.

The real story of health in the play is the decline of Barr and his desperate last attempt at creating a legacy of his life's work. As the episodes progress, Barr continues to try to work despite being hospitalized. The sicker Barr gets, the less lucid he is. Barr loses himself in the past and becomes isolated from the present and those in it. The first few episodes find Barr cantankerous, but actively exchanged in conversations with those he knows and loves. He swaps stories with his old media cronies. He exchanges barbs with his daughter, Pat, who is caring for her dad during his illness. As Barr gets sicker, he finds this arrangement unsettling. He complains, "I don't wanna be looked after, I want to look after." Such a statement echoes Barr's earlier statements against Douglas's and the CCF's plan for universal healthcare, which Barr dismisses as being like "that damn cradle-to-grave socialism in Sweden." As Barr gets sicker, he becomes increasingly unable to communicate with Pat. Barr's estranged son comes to visit, but they cannot reconcile. His illness isolates him from his daughter, his friends, and his self-image as a strong and capable father. Barr admits that he wants to write a book that will prove to his ex-wife that Douglas was not the "saint" she thought he was. Yet, one reason Barr's marriage fell apart is that he placed work ahead of his marriage. After Barr retires, he has time for his wife again, but she is long gone. Barr seems to pursue this Douglas project in order to avoid facing his own mistakes.

Memories of his own past and Douglas's most famous speeches become more real to him than his present situation. It is in the second-last episode, as Barr is close to death, that Douglas's voice turns to healthcare, intoning "never again will there be a price tag on health". Barr tries to rid himself of the memory of Douglas with, "Get out, Tommy! This is my story, I'm telling it!" It doesn't work. Barr's last words, "I have

to finish the book!" are replaced by Douglas' voice, giving a speech. Finally, Barr dies with only the voice of Douglas echoing through his tortured mind. The recording is of Douglas killing time waiting for election results. Though he never reaches the punch-line, he is telling the joke about the old man with no enemies. After Barr dies, Pat finds that her father had not even started writing his book. Barr's hopes to tell the "other side" of the legend of the man he wryly called "Saint Tommy" dies with him. Barr will leave no lasting legacy of his career behind. Barr cannot "outlive the bastard" after all.

Concerns surrounding the issues of health and healthcare outlive most people or characters. The famous women of 1916 deserve credit for their efforts to advance the causes of women and health. However, the issues they fought to improve are still a great concern to Saskatchewan residents. Barr's fight against the popular canonization of Douglas, and other political, ideological, debates surrounding *Medicare* become insignificant in the face of the larger issue of illness, death, and isolation surrounding *Health*. Barr cannot debate any point of view after his health fails. Barr's black-and-white stand for-or-against-Tommy pales beside Barr's own fight against death. The issue of health and healthcare continues, regardless of who is the poster child of the debate.

That the theme of medicine recurs in this selection of plays could be a result of Saskatchewan's social and political history. Kelley Jo Burke agrees with these reasons, but adds another, geographic, reason:

> Partly it's simply political. This is the home of Medicare, and people feel very strongly about it. But it's also, what you said, about the aging population. And maintaining a viable health care system over such a large area is just very difficult, and elders worry all the time about not having access to care because of distance as much as anything else.

Distance is often a key factor when healthcare is the issue – in Saskatchewan radio plays and in Saskatchewan's history. The reality of delivering healthcare was the subject of the earliest healthcare-related radio play in this collection.

Air Ambulance by Dave Innes was Broadcast over CBK in 1960 (30:00), it is a docudrama that aims to tell the story of the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance Service, then in its sixteenth year of operation. The very creation of the Air Ambulance Service is a testament to the distances between some Saskatchewan residents and needed medical care. The play takes the form of a documentary, which fits well into the importance put on education and inspiration in radio drama of the period. *Air Ambulance* is very much of the educational style of Mary Pattison's *Gold is Where You Find It.*[64] But where Pattison chose a more traditional, educational drama approach, Innes uses a docudrama style. The plot of *Air Ambulance,* follows a reporter character named Jack Craig who arrives at the Regina hanger of the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance Service to interview the crew. The action fades between Jack's interviews in the hangar and remembered Air Ambulance flights transporting sick and injured patients back to Regina for treatment. During the course of the play, the listener learns the air ambulance now flies about 1,000 missions a year and has carried over 12,000 patients in its sixteen year history. The service has flown many kinds of cases from polio victims in need of an iron lung, to injured farmers, to women delivering babies. The play concludes with Jack dramatically pronouncing that, "This is a story worth telling".

The real air ambulance crew-members on which the characters were based are then interviewed in studio. "Don", a fourteen-year veteran of the service, highlights both the isolation from medical care that rural residents face in Saskatchewan and the

[64] Mary Pattison's *Summerfallow* script is discussed further in the *History and Isolation* chapter.

need for the air ambulances to alleviate that problem. He says the service has "a place in Saskatchewan. The distances are so great. It's not that rural hospitals aren't good, but some patients need specialist treatment." The moral is, in a province where the people are so spread out, sometimes heroic measures are needed to provide what is considered normal medical care in an urban centre.[65] This emphasis on the health of the provincial community could be seen as indicative of a relational society.

Nonetheless, the isolation from health care and the resulting worry remain recurring themes even in more contemporary plays. In a recent interview, Sapergia spoke of the continuing fear experienced by some of Saskatchewan's rural residents living too far away from medical treatment:

> Sapergia - I suppose Saskatchewan is the place where you would expect that sort of thing. I think everyone has a horror story of how someone in their family died or was incapacitated because the wrong diagnosis was made and it wasn't always necessarily the fault of the physician, sometimes it was the state of medicine.
> *McWilliams – They were far away from the hospital...*
> Sapergia – I've written about, and this also comes out of my mother's family's experience living on a ranch near Old Wives Lake, people losing babies thirty miles from town because the roads were impassable in winter.

While not consciously setting out to write a series of plays focused on health care issues, Sapergia confessed that the frequency with which medical themes emerge in her work could be a reflection of her Saskatchewan upbringing: "I don't know whether that was just a coincidence that several pieces dealt with questions about health. You could say that just growing up in Saskatchewan, it's something we think about, along with the

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[65] Kim Dales and Roy Morrissey also touched briefly on the air-ambulance theme in their play *Turbine Time* – which played nationally as a 5-part series on CBC's Morningside in 1987. The play was the story of Sandy, a northern bush pilot who is working out of La Ronge to amass flight time on his record. As part of his job, he flies medivac flights. The plot focuses more on Sandy's personal voyage of self discovery as a pilot and person, but medical flights do appear.

crops and the weather. We're the guys who got Medicare going" (14). Although Sapergia's plays deal with healthcare-related themes, their tone is different from that of plays like *Air Ambulance* and *To Do And Endure*. *Ambulance* and *To Do* celebrate the heroes who dispense healthcare: in the case of *Ambulance*, the brave men who conquer the wilderness to save lives; in the case of *To Do*, the visionary women who fight in the political forum for better healthcare legislation. Sapergia's plays *Old Crocks* and *Grandma's Foot* speak more from the patient's view about the weaknesses and strengths of Saskatchewan's medical past.

Barbara Sapergia's *Old Crocks* (20:00), a historical drama set at Fort San circa the late 1930s, was first broadcast on February 12th, 1980, as a part of CBC Saskatchewan's Arts à la Carte Festival '80.[66] Sapergia wrote this play twenty years after Innes wrote *Air Ambulance*. While distance, isolation, and specialist medical treatment are themes common to both plays, Sapergia's "take" is far less heroic. Sapergia's play explores how medicine, in some cases, puts more emphasis on the morality of fighting disease than it does on the overall well-being of the patient.

The introduction to the play provided a solid introduction to Fort San in general. Built in 1917 by the Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League, Fort San had 369 beds at its most occupied and accepted patients from all over southern Saskatchewan. Patients were encouraged to take what might now be labeled a "proactive" approach to their

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[66] *Old Crocks*, written for *Festival '80* (see *Timescape: History and Isolation*) – Sapergia notes *Old Crocks* built on her previous research into Fort San with Geoffrey Ursell: "I should mention that we'd already done a [stage]play set at Fort San, the former tuberculosis sanatorium at Fort Qu'Appelle, which became a foundation for *Old Crocks*. It was nothing like the stage play, but it drew on all the stuff we had learned" (interview, 5).
Ursell notes: "Where the Fort San material came from is that there were summer classes at Fort San – writing classes there – and we went to them for a number of years and got interested in the place and the kinds of lives that were lived there. That led first to a stage play that Gabe Prendergast at the University of Regina commissioned and produced called *The Tenth Negative Pig*" (interview 14).

treatment, or to "chase cure" as it was called. Chasing cure consisted of rest, fresh air, good food, and fighting the impulse to cough. Sapergia spoke of how odd such a treatment seems in 2005:

> Before they had antibiotics, your attitude was considered to be critical if you wanted to get cured, so you had to "chase cure." This meant you had to follow all the directions--eat the six meals a day, drink the cups of cream and eat the huge lumps of butter they were forcing down you, and do it cheerfully, and freeze at night. Now that effective drugs exist, this rather moralistic view seems strange and archaic. (interview)

At the time *Old Crocks* is set, if "chasing cure" wasn't enough, surgeons would employ various methods of collapsing an infected lung in hopes it would stop the spread of the disease.[67]

Within *Old Crocks* there are many layers of isolation. Medically, Fort San was a hospital isolation camp where infected individuals were sent to prevent spreading tuberculosis. Geographically, Fort San was away from major centres of population, nestled into the Qu'Appelle Valley approximately 100 kilometres from Regina. This isolation bred self-sufficiency. "The Fort" had its own radio station, patient newspaper, bandstand, staff curling rink, dairy, gardens, and power-plant. *Old Crocks* character Nurse Rainbow comments on the unusual bounty the sanatorium enjoys, especially considering the rest of the province is still in the grip of the Great Depression. Economically, this surplus in the midst of famine adds to the sense of isolation already surrounding the Fort San of *Old Crocks*. Socially, Fort San was a place of sickness and therefore shunned by those who didn't have to be near it, for work, treatment, or to visit family. Later "Sans" in Canada would be built closer to population centres in an effort

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67 For more on-line history of Fort San and the treatment of TB in Canada, one can go to www.lung.ca/tb/tbhistory

to better supply the institutions with employees and allow family and friends easier access to visiting patients. Even within The Fort itself, there are varying degrees of isolation. Eddy, who is nearing release, is able to wander the hills near Fort San and pick Saskatoon berries. Lorraine, who is not benefiting from treatment, is confined to bed-rest in her room. There is also talk of babies born inside Fort San, and how they are placed in "preventoriums" to keep them safe from TB. These layers of isolation are all explored in the plot of *Old Crocks*.

The story is told through Lorraine, a twenty-three year old patient. The whole play takes place in her room at Fort San. The story unfolds both through Lorraine's dialogue with other characters entering her room, and her own inner monologue. The play begins with the revelation that Lorraine and Eddy, a 43-year-old farmer and family man, have been having an affair while "chasing cure." Eddy is responding well to treatment and will soon return home to his farm and family. Lorraine, however, is not responding well to treatment and is soon to undergo painful surgery (thoracoplasty). Eddy can't wait to be released. He imagines returning to his farm and experiencing, "the taste of wheat, the feel of sunshine" and being able to "plant my first crop in five years." His eagerness is reminiscent of the Utopian view of farm-life presented in the settler stories of other plays in the *Festival '80* series. Where it differs is that Eddy would be returning to his own farm, as opposed to setting out to create one like Frank Dobson of *The First Step*, for example. Eddy does share some of Frank's rose-coloured delusions, however. After all, it is 1937, the Great Depression. Even if Eddy can grow a crop, will he be able to sell it? Lorraine, in contrast, expresses fear over the thought

of returning home. She has heard tales of patients being released from the sanatorium and returning home only to be "treated like a walking plague."

News of Eddy's imminent release only heightens Lorraine's sense of isolation. When talking to herself, she hints that she could be pregnant. Lorraine feels a baby is safe from TB as long as it is inside her, isolated within her womb. Thus, the womb is presented as isolation and safety for the baby. But for Lorraine, the safety her baby enjoys while inside her womb highlights her own isolation. While a baby could be symbolic of regeneration and hope for the future, Lorraine will not witness that future. She resolves never to hold the baby when it is born. Lorraine would rather it be put directly into the preventorium.

Lorraine's perception of her own battle with tuberculosis and the road to recovery is the source of the title of the play. When told she'll soon be "on the mend" she explores the term mending, saying it "sounds like a pair of old socks, or old crocks, ha, that's what we are, old crocks someone's left on the shelf." Thus the image moves from mere isolation to abandonment. Eddy has left her. The only way he'll return is if his TB relapses. She is pregnant, but wants nothing to do with the baby, lest she infect it. "Chasing cure" is not curing her, so she faces painful surgery. Even if she recovers from surgery and heals enough to be released, she has no guarantee that she will be accepted back into her family home. Lorraine is sick, alone and left with little hope.

Lorraine does offer an opinion that TB could be better fought/prevented if socio-economic factors were addressed as well as medical factors. Again this brings the discussion back to Gilligan's relational approach to care and how it differs from the patriarchal, divisive approach. Eddy comments that, when it comes to TB, "Anyone

can catch it." Lorraine clarifies, "Yeah, but it helps to be poor and live in a shack and think everybody coughs." The medical establishment's approach to TB is to identify the infected individuals, isolate them in sanatoriums, then defeat the infection. A more relational approach would be to also work to correct the issues of poverty and education that Lorraine addresses.

Ghosts of medicine past also inform another of Sapergia's radio plays entitled *Grandma's Foot* (1980, 20:00). It also deals with the rift between town and country and immigrant encounters with "the establishment" in Saskatchewan's pioneer era. The play opens in a shoe store. The use of a "Shoe-Fitting Fluoroscope"[68], at their height in the 1940s and early 1950s, places the play's "present" timeline in that era. A grandmother is shopping with her granddaughter and having trouble finding a comfortable pair of shoes. Granddaughter's questions lead to Grandma telling her tale of foot-woe. As the story is told, the listener travels back in time into the memories of Grandma Luba as a young woman. Most of the play is spent in her memories, with occasional questions from the granddaughter bringing the listener back to the play's present.

When Luba was a young woman in Sweetwater, in the Dirt Hills, she injured her foot. She was scared of going to town to see the doctor. When she can no longer bear weight on the foot, her husband insists she seek medical attention. Her fears seem warranted when she is in the hospital, for the doctor refuses to listen to any of her opinions on her own health. The doctor even rewards her falling silent with a

[68] This high-tech sales device that was eventually outlawed due to fears over the danger of radiation. For more information, seek out: CBC Quirks & Quarks for March 31, 2001 found at http://www.cbc.ca/quirks/archives/00-01/mar3101.htm. There, in MP3 form, Dr. Jackie Duffman talks about the fluoroscope. Based on her article, with C. Hayter, *Baring the Sole: The Rise and Fall of the Shoe-Fitting Fluoroscope*. Isis, vol. 91 (2000). 260-282.

patronizing, "That's a good girl." The doctor decides to amputate the foot for fear of gangrene. Luba fears her life would be over without a foot. The doctor tries to sell her on a wooden replacement, but Luba dismisses the option with "what kind of foot is that?" Luba tricks the doctor into letting her go home to see to her house and children before losing her foot. Then, the tables turn. She stays at home and seeks the help of a healer woman. After one month of poultices, the foot is healing nicely, and Luba gets to keep it. The doctor seems unable to accept healing outside of his institution. Luba laughs when remembering the doctor's letters warning of dire consequences, "You are going to *die*, Mrs. Petreskue, ha, ha." She lives and keeps her foot, but it is slightly malformed and she has trouble finding comfortable shoes. The healthy, pastoral ideal of the country [and community] is reinforced it saves her foot. This idyllic, healing prairie image also appears in Sapergia and Ursell's *The Giant Who Wept.*[69] Beaupré longs for "The sheltering hills where the sickness in my chest would heal, drawn away by the hot sun and the clear sky". He believes that proximity to his rural home's healing sun and sky would cure him.

The play raises questions that highlight the rifts between the rural and the urban, and the treatment of immigrants and women when it comes to medical care in pioneer-era Saskatchewan. Would the character's foot have gotten as bad as it did if Luba had access to a city's healing resources from day one? Is her aversion to doctors a rural woman's distrust of the city? Is it a layperson's distrust of the educated establishment? The medical establishment at the time would have been largely male. The healer-woman could represent a more nurturing, relational, or feminist ethic of care. The healer-woman's gentle poultices contrast sharply with the male-doctor's aggressive

[69] More discussion in the *History and Isolation* chapter.

surgical option. The doctor cannot imagine such a cure working, but it does. Did the doctor dismiss Luba's desire for another treatment option because she is an immigrant; she is a woman; or she is from the country? Perhaps it is a combination of all three factors. In a recent interview, Sapergia said this play was inspired by a true story of her own grandmother:

> *Grandma's Foot* came out of a story I grew up hearing about my grandma. I enjoyed the irony that the doctors in the story thought she was a poor, superstitious old lady because she ran away from the hospital, but, in fact, she'd made a very shrewd decision, "I would be really stupid to let them cut off my foot." And then old-country methods of poulticing saved it. So I guess it comes out of the ethnic background and it's very much a woman's story too.

Sapergia takes great pride in how her grandmother stood up to the dominant medical establishment -- i.e. patriarchal, Anglo-Saxon, privileged, and urban -- in order to save her foot from amputation. Grandma Luba's story is an example of rural residents' anxieties regarding access to adequate and appropriate medical care being resolved by individual resourcefulness supported by family and local community.

Death, medicine, and the farm are also at the forefront of *Happy Birthday Arnie* by Dianne Warren (1985, 20:00). Though the play has comic moments, there is an undeniable connection to the developing themes of age and distance from healthcare being of concern to Saskatchewan residents. This fear is especially prevalent for elderly (albeit fictional) residents like Arnie.

Warren's play takes place on Arnie's 72nd birthday, which is being celebrated by a small dinner party involving Arnie, his wife Louise, his brother Bill, and his sister-in-law Ada. Arnie claims he has suffered a heart attack while in the garden and will spend dinner in the bedroom. No one believes him, least of all Louise, who dismisses Arnie's

complaints with "the old goat won't go to the doctor." She also accuses him of "just trying to get out of planting the rest of the potatoes." Ada is the only one who seems concerned. Arnie's "closer" relations, his wife and brother, seem not at all worried.

Arnie's isolation takes several forms. Within the house, Arnie is in the bedroom while everyone else is at the kitchen table enjoying a feast that was to honour his birthday. Arnie is a man slipping away in the midst of a surplus of nourishment, namely his family and food. Geographically, Arnie is in the country and presumably quite some distance from a hospital. If Arnie had lived in an urban setting, closer to a hospital, would his family have been more likely to take him to some form of medical care instead of dismissing his complaints? Such inaction could be evidence of a prevailing rural mindset upon which these playwrights are picking up; i.e. when you live a goodly drive from the nearest doctor, you want to be sure you are sick enough to warrant the trip. The situation is similar to Grandma Luba's initial delay before going to a doctor in "Grandma's Foot" and children's concerns over their aging mother's distance from the hospital in *Reunion.*

Arnie is also isolated emotionally. The whole time he calls for Louise, she stays in the kitchen – the heart, hearth, source of nourishment, communal centre of the house. He is removed from the dinner conversation, which is largely about him. Ada spends her meal trying to remind Bill and Lorraine of Arnie's past good deeds. While Arnie is lying alone, he calls for a priest. Lorraine dismisses the request by reminding Arnie that he is not Catholic. Arnie's call for a television to try to find an evangelist to watch is also quashed. Finally, it is his bedside clock radio that provides him what spiritual aid he can find. He sings along to a gospel show. The radio becomes his only company,

his only contact, his salvation. While the dinner progresses, Arnie stops singing. His family bring in his birthday cake only to find Arnie has died. Death becomes his ultimate isolation.

Not that being in the city is any less dangerous for some patients. According to *Dead Awake* by Connie Gault (1988), being in the city is no guarantee of a successful patient outcome. While the play operates in a darkly comic vein, it still deals with the familiar issues. A simple case of insomnia turns fatal when it encounters overly-enthusiastic medical diagnosis and an eagerness to treat with the latest scientific gadgetry, instead of choosing a more human(e) approach. The play is one conversation centring on the life and death of Alberto, an insomniac who has committed suicide after getting no sleep for six years. Three characters are present: Alberto's wife, doctor, and best friend. Their dialogue is stylized. The actors read in a stilted way that leaves the impression that they may be saying what is expected of them, but not what they feel. The script makes use of repetition, with certain repeated phrases lending a chorus-like feel to the piece. The characters seem to be aware of the weakness of their arguments, but are unable to acknowledge those weaknesses. By repeating phrases, characters appear to be attempting to convince themselves that what happened to Alberto was no one's fault. The following most-repeated lines bear witness to the character's need for absolution: "Still, he could not sleep" or the elaboration, "They ['we' or 'I'] did all they could, but still he could not sleep". Alberto is presented as a man in the grip of forces bigger and more mysterious than himself. His friends repeatedly intone: "To never sleep is to never dream" and "Death and sleep are brothers." These phrases recall images from James Quandt's *Arctic Landscapes*: a woman unable to sleep after losing

her son – as she is haunted by "yellow dreams" of his death and the image of the man likening freezing to death with falling asleep.

Gault's play paints a picture of a man spending night after night alone in the house trying to find the answer to his tormenting insomnia. His doctor assures Alberto's wife that he checked Alberto's "bladder, prostate, and colon". He tried many therapies, including "tranquillizers, relaxation therapy, hypnosis, but still, he could not sleep." But the cause of Alberto's insomnia soon becomes apparent as his wife begins giving away Alberto's collection of sleeping aids. The items were gifts from the doctor and Alberto's best friend and were intended to help Alberto sleep. One by one the gifts are presented to the two men; each gift is noisier than the last. The gifts are: a clock with a loud "tick tock" intended to make Alberto feel less alone on sleepless nights; a music box to play a lullaby all night long; maracas, to soothe his restlessness; and an overwhelmingly thunderous speaker which booms a heartbeat, which the listener assumes is supposed to recreate the calm of the womb. The womb in this case does not provide the safety and security enjoyed by Lorraine's baby in Sapergia's *Old Crocks*. An artificial womb never could offer such security. The bewildered men leave with the cacophonous collection of objects. As the wife closes the door behind them, she is left alone in blissful silence. She utters the closing lines of the play into her quiet house, "Yes, gentlemen, he may never sleep. But I will." The play is a dark and whimsical look into a paternal medical culture where the rush to diagnose and cure with the latest technology can overwhelm a patient. To cure Alberto, everyone tried everything they could. No one tried doing nothing. Perhaps if Alberto could have consulted Grandma

Luba's healer-woman, or gotten away to the quiet, pastoral countryside, he may have found a more down-to-earth, or relational, solution.

The pastoral countryside can provide a tempting, if intangible, escape, as is proven in Ernie Mutimer's *The Idyll of John Murdoch* (1985). The play begins with the recollections of John, a farmer, recalling the change from "the good old days" to the "good new days". John recalls the day Hilda, his wife, almost died of an undisclosed terminal illness, perhaps cancer. As she lay in the farmhouse dying, John went out to the meadow and heard a voice. Then, the world changed. John recalls how, to his delight, the following events took place: factory farms were replaced by local, land-loving farmers; strip mining for coal was abandoned as people turned to cleaner power sources; peace broke out across the world; and the radio stations switched from loud, angry rock music to calm, classical music; transportation also evolves - zeppelins replace jets and cars, motorboats, skidoos, and buses are replaced with bikes, canoes, horses and trolleys respectively. All of these changes seem too good to be true. They are.

John is brought back into reality close to the end of the play. The idyllic world John has been living in turns out to his own mental creation. Hilda did, in fact, die the day John heard the voice in the meadow. The shock drove John to retreat into his own perfect and pleasant mental reality. He regains awareness of reality while receiving shock treatments, intended to cure him of his mental affliction. John hears traffic outside the window of his treatment room. He is so terrified at the sound of his utopia being shattered that he suffers a fatal heart attack. The medical professionals view this as their failure. John, however, seems happy. As John dies, the listener follows him

back into his perfect world. He returns to Hilda on the farm in his perfect world. He is happier dead in his personal heaven than alive in the real world. John felt out of place in the modern world, especially without his wife, and he isolated himself within his own mind. He created his own mental reality rather than deal with the pain of the real world. Retreating to that created reality was seen by the medical establishment as severe delusion, worthy of shock treatments to remedy it. The cure worked, in that John returned to reality. But the cure kills its patient. The shock of his shattered personal utopia is fatal to John. Thus, medicine triumphs over the condition and fails the patient.

This is a different twist on the theme of the sought-after Utopia seen in the settlement-history plays. Characters like Frank, in *The First Step,* and Alec, in *North of Moose Jaw,* set out with dreams of building in Canada their own, unattainable Utopias.[70] Where Frank and Alec differ from John is that their actions prove destructive: Frank's to himself, and Alec's to his wife and marriage. John, however, suffers directly from the actions of the doctors trying to cure him of his isolation from the world. Also of interest is how the presentation of the great technological dream differs between *Idyll* and both Mary Pattison's *Gold is Where you Find It*, about the Western Development Museum in 1955, and David Innes' *Air Ambulance* of 1960. Pattison's educational drama is of an age where technology is seen as a boon to humankind. The advancement of technology is inevitable and will lead to a better world, if at the cost of a few human beings, like Mr. Nelson. *Air Ambulance* shares this faith in technology and the heroics of the medical establishment to fight the good fight. It is a battle between good (represented by medicine, technology, and healing) and evil

[70] *The First Step, North of Moose Jaw, and* Mary Pattison's *Summerfallow* play are discussed more in the chapter *History and Isolation*.

(represented by illness, injury, distance, isolation, and nature). The lines between good, healing, and evil, harm, are clear. In *Idyll*, however, the betterment of society requires, to John Murdoch, the devolution of technology. When the world seems too crazy, John packs up his mind and gets away from it all.

Finding escape and comfort in the unconscious is also at the core of Connie Gault's *The Snow Dream*. In this play, the central character, Beth, has suffered a stroke that has affected her speech. Her husband and the nurse cannot understand what she is trying to say, but the listener can. We hear Beth's voice as if we were in her head; it echoes. Beth's isolation takes several forms. Physically, she is in the hospital and thus removed from her home. Psychologically, her isolation is a result of her current inability to communicate with anyone. Beth imagines talking to her husband and "being strong enough to tell him to go off and live his own life. And in my own way, I'll live mine." Thus she would sentence herself to solitude.

Beth's recurring dream seems to be a result of her frustrated attempts at communication. The dream finds Beth walking alone through a frozen landscape. The cold, ice, and snow all conjure up images of isolation and death. Beth encounters a bridge, which collapses as she walks on it, leaving her alone at the bottom of a frozen gorge. At the top of the bank, hope appears in the form of her dead grandmother. At first, Beth is afraid for her apparently frail granny, who dispels any worry by hoisting a forty pound sack of potatoes easily, then tobogganing down to Beth on a piece of cardboard.[71] It is this dream Grandmother that finally offers some human connection,

[71] Potatoes as recurring image: In *Snow Dream*, Beth's grandmother hauls a sack of potatoes representing nourishment and security. This security and nourishment provided by previous generations and food is echoed in another of Barbara Sapergia's radio plays, *Eating Avocados*. Sapergia describes the play as being "about issues of women and particularly (at least this was an important theory) the idea that girls

for she can understand Beth. The play ends with Beth relieved, saying "I'm so glad you're here." Beth's grandmother thus becomes a source of nourishment for Beth. Emotionally, Beth can connect with a human being again if only in her dreams.

Beth is not the only woman who finds comfort in an encounter with her deceased grandmother. Such a conversation is at the centre of Kelley Jo Burke's *Had a Great Fall* (no date, 28:46). In the play a new mother, Carole, learns to better understand herself and her own mother by conversing with a dual spectre of her dead grandmother Elsie. One version is Elsie as an old paranoid woman; the other version is Elsie as a young woman. The play opens with Carole hyperventilating under the kitchen table, much to her own dismay. She says, "I tried to be ever so much more than a crazy lady under the table". While Carole barely suppresses panic, her new baby, Dina, is quietly sleeping upstairs. The inspiration for Carole's panic soon becomes apparent. Carole is conversing with her dead Nana Elsie, who panics about everything to do with babies. While growing up, Carole faced a barrage of warnings from Elsie:

> At seven, I nearly died of a broken neck. There was the constant threat of house fires, or there were poisonings. Not to mention my near-brushes with death through near swallowings of tacks, pins, toothpicks, sharp-edged crackers. She was afraid of water, light, used Kleenex, and heights – especially heights.

This influence of Nana Elsie on Carole seems overwhelming. Carole claims, "I have become Nana Elsie, which is not a huge surprise. The huge surprise is that I held out this long." To Carole, this is all a case of "Neurotic possession. It's all rather

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did it to have control over something in their lives. They couldn't control a lot, but they were damn well going to control their weight." The play finds a mother, Rita, trying to deal with her daughter's eating disorder. Rita's therapist asks, "What is food?" This sparks a free-association riff from Rita that food is, among other things, "potatoes in the camp-fire with dad ... food comes from my mother, food *is* mother."

Potatoes appear again in *Happy Birthday Arnie* when Louise accuses Arnie of faking his heart attack just to get out of picking potatoes. Tracy links burnt potatoes and spousal abuse in *Reunion.* Frau Klaus peels only enough potatoes for herself to declare that she has chosen to let her husband freeze in the yard in *The Silence*. Thus, potatoes become both a symbol of nourishment and of death.

cannibalistic, isn't it, Nana? You finally die. I finally have a baby and as Dina pops out of the bottom, you climb in at the top end and start making me as mad as you." Not only is this possession overwhelming, for a while Carole thinks it is a scientific inevitability. Carole makes the following argument:

> You and me and mother. We're just part of a long line of chemically defective women, right? Please? We're so flawed that whenever we come to life's crossroads, and there are these large, glowing signs saying, "for happiness, turn left" and the other, "for misery, crushing disappointment, and eventual commitment to a centre for the development of greater stability, turn right" our bloodlines invariably snaps us right.

But blood doesn't prove as predetermining as Carole thinks. While under the table, Carole also talks to a Young Elsie. The story of Elsie is revealed; in short, she married for stability and not for love. Elsie loved Ben madly. Ben was a Jew and a Communist and therefore completely unacceptable to Elsie's WASP family. Elsie loved Ben, but chose not to elope with him. Instead, she chose Adam, because "Adam was always sure." Adam was also part of the dominant community that Elsie's family would find much more acceptable. Nana, in talking to Carole, admits that "I didn't know how to come down." By not "coming down" or following her heart, she lived a life full of regret. Carole, by listening, has learned how to "come down." She says, simply "You fall." Carole realizes that she has to let herself go just as she did when she fell in love with her daughter. Fear shouldn't push out happiness. As Carole reveals, "You try your best and still, bad things happen. They shatter your heart. Very beautiful things can happen, too, if you let yourself fall." Elsie's fear of falling prevented her from living life to the fullest. Her choice of husband also represents a refusal to turn against the tide of what the dominant culture would deem a suitable match for her.

Carole, however, chooses to live and love, even if it hurts. Thus, Carole can come out from under the kitchen table and go enjoy her baby. Carole learns from both versions of her grandmother about how to enjoy life more by not following their/her example.

The importance of understanding previous generations to ensure the well-being of the present generation is also at the heart of *Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground,* written in 1986 by Janice Acoose-Pelletier and Brenda Zeman. Where *And Did the Dog See This?* features Harry, Piapot's grandson, as simply another creation of the playwright, *Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground* features one of its playwrights as a character in the play. In the play, Janice Acoose-Pelletier goes for a run. Along the way she gains a better understanding of her own grandfather. The play is a biographical look at the life of Paul Acoose, world-record holding long-distance running champion from the Sakimay Reserve. The voice of the playwright and a main character is the same: Janice Acoose Pelletier. She acts as a main character and narrator. Janice speaks between dramatized events in the life of Paul Acoose. Her narration recalls her own memories of her grandfather. Dramatized scenes from Paul Acoose's life are also included, as is a narrator's voice to fill in expositional information between the re-created scenes of triumph and trial from Paul Acoose's life.

In *Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground,* Janice mourns for the sense of belonging she felt at her grandparents' home: "My kookum and mooshum were two unique spirits. Their home on the reserve was a special meeting place for all my cousins, aunts and uncles. That special feeling isn't there anymore" (84). Janice also notes how Paul Acoose was torn between two worlds when it came to religion, "I can still hear him proudly speaking of the rain dance and the joy he felt as a grass dancer.

But I also remember the Sunday ritual, when he would worship the Christian god. Rather than hold his head high in pride as he did when he spoke of the rain dance, he hung his head as he entered the house of worship" (Acoose 84). This recall's Piapot's advice to his grandson in *And Did the Dog See This?* where he wryly suggests to live "half Christian and half Indian, so when you die, you'll only be half wrong."

Paul Acoose's spirituality and his need to be near his family led to his abrupt departure from professional running. Acoose retired after defeating Tom Longboat, whom Janice calls "his kindred spirit, the Onondaga Indian from the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario" (Studio One 91). Acoose wanted to return home to Saskatchewan and stay there. In the script he says, "(*firmly*) I want to go home. I'm tired of running in circles" (Studio One 93). The isolation Acoose experienced on the professional running circuit was acute enough to make retiring his only choice. Paul left the paternal world of competitive running where individual triumph is the pinnacle of achievement. He left before it broke him physically and spiritually. He chose instead to return, healthy, to the more relational world of his wife, family, and community. By returning home, Acoose achieved what Beaupré, in *The Giant Who Wept*, could only dream of doing.

Paul Acoose was a man who experienced two worlds and running was his connection to both. Paul Acoose recalls his father, Old Paul Acoose, introducing him to running on the open prairie. Old Paul, and his father Quewich gained renown for their running feats hunting buffalo and elk. Paul Acoose gained renown by winning races. When Janice runs, it brings her a better understanding of who her grandfather was. She realizes that, "Because of all the running, my legs were numb and my feet felt as though

they weren't touching the ground! It was then I finally really understood my grandfather's name – Acoose, 'Man Standing Above Ground'" (*Acoose* 84). Running becomes something sublime, allowing Janice to leave the ground, or this world and to find a stronger sense of belonging with past generations. It also relieves some of her own feelings of isolation by providing her with a stronger sense of how she is part of her family's history.

Such connection to and pride in one's ancestors was part of a conscious effort of the co-producers of *Acoose* to provide a means of relieving historical and personal alienation faced by First Nations people, especially the youth, of Saskatchewan. The play was a co-production between CBC Saskatchewan and KaTipAim Media Productions Limited.[72] Janice Acoose-Pelletier and Will Campbell appeared on CBC Saskatchewan's Ambience with host Lorie Regehr to discuss *Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground*.[73] Acoose-Pelletier spoke of her frustration over the previous year's heritage celebrations and how she hoped to celebrate "Indian people who brought significant attention to this country." KaTipAim came into being, largely through funding from the Department of Education. Will Campbell saw the company as an opportunity for Native writers to start telling their own stories: "We're re-writing Canada's history through film, through print, from the Indian and Métis point of view" because "History will never be really given or written until the Indian and Métis people come forth and fulfill their half of the public library, or the other half of Canadian History" (Arts Week). Acoose-Pelletier also hoped to provide a more balanced history class for her own children, so that her son would not have to "put his head down, as I

[72] *Ka Tip Aim* - Cree for "those who own themselves".
[73] On February 8, 1986.

did when I was in school and think 'Oh God, they're going to talk about Indians now and I don't want to look like one of those barbaric savages'" (Arts Week). *Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground* was Acoose-Pelletier's first celebration of Aboriginal pioneers in radio drama form.

Re-shaping the ethical, political, and personal to include a feminist ethic of care takes Biblical proportions in Martha Morgan's *Re-Runs* (1986, 20:00). In this play, the medical culture takes the form of a psychological/sociological laboratory experiment. The play opens on a world in turmoil. An academic has discovered a scroll that states that it was Adam, not Eve, who first bit the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. World upheaval ensues as male-dominated patterns of thought are challenged and rejected. Within the safety of a laboratory, a project testing new technology that can delve into ancestral memory is underway. Test subject Susan is regressed back to Eve. Research assistant Daniel records what she says. Eve reveals that God created her first. The serpent then told Eve to ask for a mate. God warns Eve that man will bring war, destruction, and pain to the earth. Eve convinces God to relent and man is unleashed upon the earth. Eve admits that "I have brought the scourge of man to the world. But such a sweet scourge." As the experiment continues, the computer runs out of control – even after it has been unplugged. The listener assumes it is divine intervention. The program can't be shut down. Eventually, the world disappears. Daniel and Susan wake up in the garden of Eden. They are now Adam and Eve. Eve takes charge, saying "Here, have a fig leaf. Things are going to be a little different this time around." The assumption is that Eve, this time firmly in charge, will re-build the world in a more relational way, employing a system more akin to Gilligan's feminist ethic of care.

The subject of health and healthcare resonates throughout this selection of Saskatchewan radio plays. This could be due to several factors: Saskatchewan's socio-political history as being the home of Medicare; the aging population of the province that holds healthcare and access to it in such high regard; or the underlying rural/urban tension over access to care. *Air Ambulance* highlights the challenges of keeping an isolated population healthy. *Air Ambulance* also shows an unflinching trust in the medical system that is not always apparent in plays written twenty years later, in the 1980s. *Old Crocks* explores another history of Saskatchewan medicine, the Sanatorium Age, and how "Chasing Cure" could leave some patients behind. Also apparent is a cautionary note against medicine that values treatment above the patient. Both Alberto in *Dead Awake* and John in *The Idyll of John Murdoch* are polished off by misguided expert treatments. Fears of an aging population and the distance they live from the hospital are touched on in contemporary plays like *Reunion* and *Happy Birthday Arnie*.

The voice of the playwright in plays dealing with health issues is most often a woman's. Gilligan's call for a need to shift a discourse from the patriarchal to a more relational, feminist voice reflects the lessons learned in these plays. The fact that healthcare and the fight for Medicare are celebrated in Saskatchewan radio plays shows this shift could be under way. *To Do and Endure* sees women gaining a voice to fight for a healthier society. There is also a strong sense of the value of women's connecting voices, past and present, in keeping a family healthy. Both Carole (*Had a Great Fall*) and Beth (*Snow Dream*) turn to, or recreate, women from their pasts to help ease anxieties when they are unable to meaningfully communicate with anyone in the physical world. Their created connections differ from those of the title character of *The*

Idyll of John Murdoch. After losing his wife, his female connection in the world, John chooses to create a whole new world in order to keep her in it. The play focuses on describing the environmental, social, and technological changes that define John's good-new-days world instead of focusing on the personal connections within it. When John's world crashes, he dies. His imaginings have only further isolated him from the real world. His community cannot reach him, and he does not invoke a guiding spirit akin to Beth's Grandmother or Carole's Nana Elsie to aid his healing. John dies and remains separate. In *Auld Acquaintance*, Barr dies bitter, sick, and angry because he sacrificed his marriage to pursue a career that will never escape the shadow of the politician he spent his life covering. He has chosen autonomy over relational connections and paid for it. An apocalyptic erasing and re-writing of the earth's social order, as if the earth were a great cosmic Etch-a-sketch, as seen in *Reruns* may be too drastic a step. But these plays do advocate the strength of a relational society over a patriarchal society. The ideal is the strong community, not the weak, lone person.

CONCLUSION

After exploring themes of isolation in some of Saskatchewan's radio dramas through the lenses of *Timescape, Landscape,* and *Bodyscape,* it is time to revisit my original questions: First, to what extent are the stories told on the radio by Saskatchewan playwrights affected by the geographic and demographic isolation experienced by residents of the province in which they live? Second, if the most acute isolation experienced by Saskatchewan residents was historic, i.e. during the history of European settlement, why are there still strong thematic currents of isolation appearing throughout Saskatchewan radio plays written *after* 1980?

Radio drama's connection to isolation is, in part, due to the strengths of radio itself. Radio is a tool by which isolated people can experience the greater world. This connection has been evident from the earliest days of radio. When CBK first broadcast from Watrous in 1939, then-Manitoba Premier John Bracken spoke from Winnipeg to the three prairie provinces and northern U.S. States within broadcast range. He bragged about how technology can bring people, and thus the country, closer, saying "CBC has annihilated space." When people are connected, ideas spread farther and faster. In the same CBK broadcast, then-Alberta Premier "Bible Bill" Aberhart dubbed radio the "most efficient in the spread of ideas and all progress spreads from ideas." Isolation has informed the Saskatchewan experience from the acute geographical isolation as alleviated by the new medium in the earliest days of radio in Saskatchewan, to the more complex human experiences of social, psychological, and physical isolation as expressed in the Saskatchewan radio plays written in the 1980s. The ideas being spread on the radio often deal with isolation and the importance of relieving it.

Isolation is danger. Community is safety. The dangers of isolation experienced by Saskatchewan settlers still resonate strongly with playwrights working in 1980s Saskatchewan for several reasons. Saskatchewan is still a harsh, dangerous place in which to be isolated. *Timescape* explored how the dangers of isolation faced by the settlers of Saskatchewan exacted a heavy physical, psychological, and social toll. The danger of facing the land alone in settler-era Saskatchewan was no mere metaphor. People left alone withered and succumbed. Stories of isolation from this era still resonated enough in the 1980s to become a significant part of contemporary radio dramas that looked back into history for inspiration. *Landscape* examined plays that evoke powerful themes of isolation and nature in contemporary settings. The physical danger of the prairie landscape is still very real, but it is paired with psychological damage that can result from being alone. *Bodyscape* moves past the fear of rural Saskatchewan's harshness and delves into the fear of being removed from such a landscape if it is your home – as evidenced by Beaupré (*The Giant Who Wept*) and Grandma Luba (*Grandma's Foot*). Pride in the history of progress in Saskatchewan is tempered by an awareness of the human cost of such achievement: Nelson's hand in *Gold is Where You Find It,* and the broken family units seen in *The First Step,* and *North of Moose Jaw*. The economic forces placing increasing stress on the rural economy of 1980s Saskatchewan, the "way of life dying" of which Burke speaks, can inspire stories of uncertainty, doubt, and the fear of being alone -- especially when faced with medical crises in a remote/rural area. This need for connection and community places a great emphasis on the value of the relational voice in a healthy community, as explored in the chapter *Bodyscape.*

The strength of community and dangers of isolation are lessons that Saskatchewan residents learned early. The economics of agriculture in Saskatchewan have led to the rise of co-operative movements such as The Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association (1901), the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (1924), the Municipal Hail Insurance Association (1917), The Co-operative Elevator Company (1917) (Stirling 17). The socio-political landscape of this province has been unmistakably co-operative in nature. The CCF/NDP were the first socialist government elected in North America in 1944. But Saskatchewan public institutions such as publicly owned utilities, the Saskatchewan Transit Company (STC Buses, 1946), Saskatchewan Government Insurance (1945), and Medicare (1960s) were, for most of the twentieth century, maintained by provincial governments of various political stripes (eb.com/eb/article-43201Government policies).[74]

The arts community in Saskatchewan has also benefited from efforts to relieve isolation. The University of Saskatchewan's Extension Division began outreach to the province soon after the U of S was established in 1907. The Saskatchewan Arts Board, founded in 1948, was the first organization of its kind in North America. It continues working to enhance artistic opportunities for amateur and professional artists. Today, many arts organizations continue to work to support Saskatchewan artists, for example the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild and the Saskatchewan Playwrights' Centre.

The historic danger of isolation has bred an awareness of the value of community in endeavours beyond mere survival. Cooperation and community are a part of the ethos of Saskatchewan which percolates through the themes and subject matter of plays written for Saskatchewan radio listeners. Thus isolation and the struggle to relive it have continued to be an important and recurring theme of Saskatchewan radio plays written

[74] See *Appendix E: Timeline* for more.

long after the harshest examples of physical isolation of Saskatchewan residents passed into history.

Future Study

This thesis has been intended as a first foray into the CBC Archives stored within the Saskatchewan Archives Recorded Sound Collection which has been thus far critically ignored. There is great potential for further research projects. It is important to note that not all contemporary Saskatchewan radio drama conforms to Atwood's bleak and forlorn vision of Canadian Literature. Burke notes that while some Saskatchewan playwrights revel in landscape for inspiration, others take pride in not doing so:

> There's the writing from the land, there and of course the sort of counter-push to that comes from the urban Saskatchewan writers. Which is like, 'I don't like the land, you know? I write from the mall!' And we're getting that more and more. They're like, 'I am from Saskatchewan, but I don't write from the land, I don't like country music, I don't even know what a coulee is, if it's not something you buy at 7-11. I write from the city.' In the last ten years, I've been starting to get a lot of that kind of work.

This recent counter-push is important to note. In addition to the dark, land-based, fatalistic tragedies inspired by "writing from the land," Burke also speaks of the comedy born of steppes like Saskatchewan, "people who live in the darkness tend to laugh more than most because what else are you going to do? So the comedy has a darkness, but also a sharpness that is very unique." A study into comedy in Saskatchewan radio drama could provide a unique glimpse into Saskatchewan culture by examining what makes us laugh.

Also of interest in this collection are plays that explore corporate or capitalist culture. Saskatchewan, being the first region in North America ever to elect a socialist

government, has bred playwrights that take a critical, often comical look at capitalism. Some such plays of note are Charles Friederick's *The Decision Maker* (1984); *The Encapsulation of Marvin Beale* by Martha Morgan; Mischa Popov's *Casual Fridays;* Barbara Sapergia's *Harvest the Sun* (1989); and Geoffrey Ursell's *Great Bridge Plan* (1980).

There are a significant number of radio dramas in serial form in this collection such as Dianne Warren's "End of Season" (5 episodes, 1992); Geoffrey Ursell's "Lou Trilogy": *The Adventures of the Lady that's Known as Lou* (5 episodes, 1989), *The Rum Runners of Rainbow Ravine* (10 episodes, 1990), and *Murder at Manito* (5 episodes, 1995); and Mansel Robinson's *The Education of Annie McBride* (5 episodes, 1995). The serial form provides a radio playwright a bigger canvas (time-wise) than is usually provided. A study into both the serial form and the themes/content of plays chosen for the serial form could be another interesting path into these plays.

Barbara Sapergia, in our conversation regarding *The Giant Who Wept*, brought up the question of the voice of the play. Beaupré was of the French and Métis culture. Sapergia and Ursell are not. Sapergia admits that they probably would not pursue such a project today because their voice as playwrights is so different from Beaupré's voice. This awareness of the voice of the playwright and the appropriateness of the stories the playwright chooses to tell warrants more study. Such study is especially necessary when it comes to the Aboriginal voice in Saskatchewan radio drama and audio art.

Defining the Aboriginal Voice within the framework of Saskatchewan radio drama can be difficult for several reasons. The first issue faced is identifying the "voice of the story" as a part of the institutional voice of CBC Saskatchewan. It is important to

acknowledge that regardless of who writes the story, at some level it still has to pass through the institution of the CBC before it can be broadcast. Kelley Jo Burke, as a radio producer, is thus part of that institutional voice. Burke, however, takes seriously her role in providing opportunities for many cultural voices on the radio. In a recent interview, Burke said:

> The public broadcaster has a responsibility to represent the community, as opposed to simply the arts community. So, when I came into the job, I said, "Well, for starters, we ain't gonna be so white while I'm here because it's inappropriate." ... The aboriginal voice is the most important and burgeoning voice in the province and on the province's airwaves.

The CBC, as long as it is the only outlet for radio drama in Saskatchewan, will always be considered, rightly or wrongly, as an institutional voice that has ultimate control over the creative process. Until such a time as another broadcaster airs audio drama in Saskatchewan, or new technologies such as satellite radio and pod-casting[75] make room for more productions outside of CBC, the CBC is the institution from which all radio drama and related audio art will flow.

The arc of Native Voice on CBC Saskatchewan is a fascinating topic that deserves further study. One possible perspective could be to track the journey from the institutional voice -- A.K.A. white-guys-from-the-CBC gathering and producing stories -- to more examples of aboriginal writers telling stories *through* the CBC. Landmarks along this trail could include such works as Rex Deverell's *And Did the Dog See This?* which appeared as part of Arts à la Carte's *Festival '80*; the audio art piece *Buffalo Graveyard* by Glen Sorestad (1981); 1985's *The Riel Commission* and the surrounding

[75] Sheila Ann Manuel Coggins of *about.com* defines podcasting as, "an audio file in MP3 format and delivered online via RSS feed (webfeed) subscriptions. Podcast subscribers can listen to the show at his or her own leisure, which is the main attraction of this medium. As unlike Internet radio, there is no schedule to follow."

cultural debates that occurred on CBC Saskatchewan Radio arts programming; 1986's *Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground* and Ka Tip Aim Media Productions; Greg Daniels' *Night Driving* (1988); Andrew Suknaski's feature *Indeo: The Wood Mountain Stampede Intertribal* (1990); Andrea Menard's cabaret-style *Velvet Devil* (2001); and 2004's *My Indian Brother*, written by Métis playwright Mirelda Fiddler. Such a study could take into account not only the audio art from the CBC, but also theatrical, political, literary, and other developments within Saskatchewan and the rest of Canada.

As far as studying the gay voice in Saskatchewan radio drama, there is a marked shortage of material to study. In the over 100 plays, features, and audio art pieces I've encountered, I found one gay character. This character does not even speak in the show; he is referred to. The play in question is a one man show, *Larry lives in L.A.* by Bob Barnsley of Saskatoon. The gay character is the title character's best friend, Kyler. The gay voice Saskatchewan radio drama is woefully absent. Why this is so demands attention.

The Saskatchewan tradition of radio drama continues. CBC Saskatchewan is producing works by established playwrights and burgeoning writers. Each year, young Saskatchewan writers can enter CBC Saskatchewan's Youth Drama Competition. Winners get a play produced on CBC Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan's 100th birthday has added a twist to this year's competition, as Kelley Jo Burke explains:

> This year it's special, because this is Saskatchewan's centennial. So, we've commissioned five playwrights to write stories of Saskatchewan's past -- and we give them to the kids and we ask them, 'This is the history. What's the future going to be?' We're asking the kids of the province to write our future. We're going to have two high-school winners and one in elementary. Elementaries are allowed to write as a class. We'll produce all of those and run them as a series about what the future holds.

Future Saskatchewan writers are gaining awareness of the creative possibilities of radio drama and audio art in general. This awareness, combined with the potential expansion of audio art into new technological realms such as satellite radio and pod-casting, could make audio art a “paying-gig” again for producers other than those working with the CBC. This could lead to more voices, subjects, and themes reaching the ears of more listeners and creating more material for continued study of the genre of radio drama/audio art in Saskatchewan.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

SELECTED SASKATCHEWAN RADIO PLAYS: 1950-2005[76]

Acoose-Pelletier, Janice and Brenda Zeman. "Acoose: Man Standing Above Ground." Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 80-107. First broadcast on Ambience. Producers: Will Campbell and Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 8 Feb. 1986. 28:00.

Janice Acoose-Pelletier goes for a run. While doing so, she gains a better understanding of her own grandfather: Paul Acoose, world-record holding long-distance running champion from the Sakimay Reserve. Janice's narration and memories of her grandfather link re-created scenes of triumph and trial from Paul Acoose's life.

Barnsley, Bob. "Larry Lives in L.A." Ambience. With Lew Weatherall. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13594T1. [no date] 30:00.

Barnsley created this play as a Fringe show, and adapted it for radio. In the play, Larry looks back on his move to L.A. from Canada, his divorced parents, his step mother, his alcoholic mother back in Edmonton, his own likes and loves, and his coming of age in Los Angeles.

Brewer, James. "The First Step." Arts à la Carte. With James Brewer, Beth Lischeron, Ken Kramer, Trudy Cameron, John Buller, Gabriel Prendergast, and Linda Huffman. Producer/Director Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK05339T1 or R-5339. 1 Mar. 1980. 25:00.

Drawn by rosy descriptions of the Last Best West, Frank Dobson emigrates from London, England, to Western Canada in the early 1900s. Frank hopes to set up a better life in Canada for himself and his wife Lily, pregnant with the couple's first child. Frank finds the reality of the settler life harsher than was advertised in England. Eventually, Frank does move to his own farm. He raises enough money for Lily to sail from England with their baby. But by the time Lily arrives in Saskatchewan, Frank has died of the flu.

Burke, Kelley Jo. "Had a Great Fall." Ambience. With Pamela Haig, Susan Williamson, and Paula Costain. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14025T1 or R-14025. [no date] 28:46.

[76] This bibliography represents only the works of audio art selected for review as part of my research. The Recorded Sound Collection of the Saskatchewan Archives houses more. See the introduction for more details regarding the scope of this study. Plays from "the Archives of Kelley Jo Burke, CBC Saskatchewan" are currently held in the safekeeping of Kelley Jo Burke, producer for CBC Saskatchewan's Gallery.

The play explores the stress of being a new mother, the influence of previous generations on women, and how a life of safe choices may leave one unfulfilled. Carole, a new mother, learns to understand herself and her own mother better. As the play opens, Carole is found hyperventilating under the kitchen table. Her new baby, Dina, is upstairs. Carole is conversing with her dead Nana Elsie, who panics about everything to do with babies. Carole also talks to a Young Elsie. The story of Elsie is revealed; in short, she married for stability and not for love. Carole chooses to live fully, with greater risk of hurt and happiness. Thus, Carole emerges from under the kitchen table to enjoy her baby.

---. "Jane's Thumb." Ambience. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 7, Oct. 1996. 12:00.

A very expectant single mother, Jane, converses with her unborn child, Thumbelina. They help each other through the last days of pregnancy and childbirth. When the child is born, it is a boy. Jane realizes that the Thumbelina she was talking to was herself.

Burnard, Bonnie. "Nice Girls Don't Tell." Morningside. With Tricia Allen, Kate Gregg, and Gaye Burgess. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan Regina. ARCSK14165T1 or R-14165. 4 Apr. 1989. 14:24.

Three women meet annually at a beachside cottage to celebrate their birthdays and discuss their lives, Dutch's promiscuity, and generally renew acquaintances. Ruby, a beautiful woman in her forties has only ever slept with one man, her husband. Anne serves as the narrator. Her husband died unexpectedly when she was 36. Anne has had more than one lover, but not many. Dutch has had 49 men. She talks a lot about them. Tensions arise when Anne refuses to talk about her latest affair because, "Nice girls don't tell." But all is made better when they decide to make a detailed list of all of their past lovers as they drink until dawn.

Burns, Cliff. "Walking Ernie." Ambience. With Lew Weatherall, Gaye Burgess, Kent Allen, and Sharron Bakker. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13526T1 or R-13526. [no date]. 25:00.

The weekly trials that surround a weekly family ritual. Shirley, with her boyfriend Ted, makes her weekly visit to her mentally-handicapped brother Ernie to take him for a walk to the park. Shirley loses her temper and the visit ends earlier than expected.

Caruso, Donna. "The Fig Tree." The Arts Wrap. With Dianne D'Aquila, Frank Ruffo, Toni Ellwand, and Vince Corazza. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14294T1 or R-14294. 17 Sept. 1995. 20:00.

About Italian immigrant parents, Concetta and Dominick, adjusting to their Canadian-ized children, Franchesca, Maria, and Alfonse. Cossetta narrates. Dominick, a shoemaker, works in his garden to alleviate the guilt he feels for leaving his parents in Italy. As a result, the kids tell their

mother everything. As Dominick plants his fig tree to honour his parents, Concetta learns that: her oldest, Francesca, is pregnant by the gynecologist she lives with. The two will wed next month; Maria, the middle child, is in love with Arnie, a Protestant, and wants to marry in a church, in June, in her mother's wedding dress; and Alfonse, youngest, in a rock band that has broken up and wants to learn his father's trade and work with him. Concetta prepares a wonderful meal to get Dominick happy enough to tell him. He sees through the ruse and asks for the news. To Concetta's surprise, he finds it all great news. He wonders why the children wouldn't be there to tell him themselves. In the end, Dominick is happy, and vows to be more open to his family.

---. "Zini and Zaba: Together Again." Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 95-107. Broadcast on Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK11167T1. 12 Nov. 1988. 20:00.

Small town psychic, Madam Zini, lives alone with her talking cat Tuxedo. Zini gets a ride to choir practice with the new man in town, Vern Zaba. At choir practice, she flirts with George, but takes Vern home for a drink. There he learns all about the spirit world and reincarnation. It so happens that in a former life, Zini was his wife and trapeze partner. He dropped her to her death because of her affair with the lion tamer. The lion tamer spontaneously combusted and re-incarnated as a lion who telephones Zini from time to time. Vern is freaked out both by this story and by the fact that he can understand Tuxedo. Vern spontaneously combusts. Zini takes it in stride, as if it's not new, and life presses on.

Cornish, Kerri. "Mildred's 104th Birthday Extravaganza." Gallery. Produced by Kelley Jo Burke. Recorded at CBC Saskatchewan, 5 Jun. 2000. 12:00.

Mildred heads out on the town with Harriet on her 104th birthday. She grabs some hip fashions and heads to a rave. There she is spotted by her great-granddaughter, Josie. Great granddaughter calls her mom to come get Mildred, who is found stripping on the table in a nearby restaurant. Mildred is returned home by her granddaughter and great-granddaughter.

Crail, Archie. "The Returnee." Gallery. With: Nicky Guadagni, Merrill Mathews, Welcome Ngozi, and Wayne Bowman. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14290T1 or R-14290. 3 Jan. 1996. [no time].

Two women on a South African Farm, Mistress, Hermien, and Maid, Mieta, are visited by Joseph, a black South African man recently returned from Canada. Joseph's car has broken down on the way to speak to a meeting of the ANC. Hermien goes out of her way, and against her husband's standing orders, to show that "things are different now." She offers Joseph tea off a tray, a room in their house, and a place at their table. Mieta is furious. Hermien never thought to ask Mieta to come in from the back stoop, where she drinks her tea from a tin cup eats her supper. The play ends with Hermien getting everything ready. Everyone

will eat dinner at the table. Hermien braces herself to tell her husband, Yohannes, that "things are different here."

Crozier, Lorna, and Patrick Lane. "Chile." Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 13-22. Broadcast on CBC Radio's State of the Arts. 4 Oct. 1987. 20:00.

This blend of radio drama and radio feature was based on the two poets' Chilean journey in 1987, at the height of Pinochet's regime. They recorded stories, took notes, wrote poems – then returned and shaped it into a radio script including music, poetry, stories, and re-created statements from Chileans (the recorded stories from Chile were scripted and read by actors). The poets remember their trip, experiences, and the actors tell the stories recorded in Chile, many of which are stories of horrific torture and oppression.

Currie, Bob. "Running." Ambience. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience Archives of Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 28 Oct. 1999. 12:00.

Ed is jogging. He is on his second marriage and fretting over his strained relationship with his daughter from his first marriage, Laurel. When he returns home, Ed and Laurel argue. It is revealed that Laurel and Ed's strained relationship stems from an accident. Laurel had a brother, Robert. On a family vacation, Robert drowned in a river. Ed had hold of both Robert and Laurel, but had to drop one to save the other (and himself). Ed has relentlessly pushed Laurel to "live for two" ever since. At the end of the play, Laurel asks Ed if he ever wished he had saved Robert instead.

---. "North of Moose Jaw." Arts à la Carte. With James Brewer, Linda Huffman, Gabriel Prendergast, David McNally, Allan Bratt, and Kim McCaw. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK05346T1 or R-5346. 3 Mar. 1980. 30:00.

Alec, a restless soul, is tired of his sod-house-life on the prairie near early twentieth century Moose Jaw. He is disillusioned by the drudgery of pioneer life. It is not as romantic as the "bloody boosters" made it out to be. Alec hears about high cattle prices in the Yukon. He leaves behind Jessie, his wife, and launches into a scheme to drive cattle north and sell them for great profits. After a grueling cattle drive, Alec and friends find out that Yukon cattle prices are only average. They barely get enough money to cover their costs. Alec writes to Jesse that he cannot return home until spring. Jessie is resolved not to spend another winter alone while Alec chases fortune and adventure.

---. "This Time of Year in Triumph." Ambience. With Stephen Arsenytch, Ken Kramer, and Victor Young. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK09388T1 or R-9388. 25 Aug. 1984. 8:00.

Three men of Triumph, a small Saskatchewan town, tell three stories about a fatal car crash. The crash involved two young men, Earl Hacker, who survived, and Jason Thorton, who died. Jason's Grandpa blames the

bootlegger who sold the boys booze. The bootlegger blames Jason; Floyd believes Jason was driving while Earl slept in the back seat. Earl Hacker is consumed by guilt. Earl was driving the car, but after Jason died in the crash, Earl blamed Jason.

Dales, Kim and Roy Morrissey. "Auld Acquaintance." Ambience. Ten episodes. With Ken Kramer, Gaye Burgess, Carol Gay Bell, Bill Vickers, Stephen Walsh, Mark Wilson, Josh Meissner, Jean Freeman, Bill Hugli, Stephen Fielden, Stephen Arsenych, Brian Way, and Chris Scott. Producer Wayne Schmalz. Includes archives audio from Saskatchewan Archives Board, Birdsong Films, and the NDP. ARCSK09898T1 through ARCSK10017 or R-9898 to R-10017. 12 Jul. 1986 through 13 Sept. 1986. Ten Episodes, each between 11:00 and 17:00.
Note: With archives audio of Tommy Douglas's speeches from Saskatchewan Archives Board, Birdsong Films, and the NDP. (see ep. 10 thanks)
From the R-9898 text files:

> The drama follows the struggles of retired journalist OJ Barr who is writing a book about Douglas. From the 1930s to the 1970s Barr worked for a newspaper that was ideologically opposed to Douglas's politics. Barr shared the newspaper's sentiments, but at the same time was fascinated by this highly successful and engaging politician. Barr finds that his anxieties about Douglas's politics, first encountered during his newspaper days, are rekindled as he attempts to write this book.

Plot summary: Barr is going through old tapes of Tommy Douglas's speeches and remembering both his career and Douglas's. Barr's health is failing. As he passes between the present and memories, he becomes more incoherent. Finally, he dies with only the voice of Douglas echoing through his tortured mind.

---. "Hammersmith." Ambience. Five episodes (only four seem to have aired). With Anne Wright, Ken Kramer, Stephen Arsenych, and Victor Young. Producer Wayne Schmalz. Series produced for Morningside. Episode 1 ARCSK09406T1 or R-9406 - 5 Jan. 1985; Episode 2, ARCSK09407T1 or R-9407 - 12 Jan. 1985; Episode 3, ARCSK09408 or R-9408 - 26 Jan. 1985; Episode 4, ARCSK09409 or R-9409 – 2 Feb. 1985; Times range from 9:00 to 16:00. Total 85:00.
Note: Unaired Episode (originally 3/5), ARCSK10357T1/T2 or R-10357.

> Plot: A comic treatment of two city folks, Anne and Michael, who are trying to start over on a farm. With the help of two local Ukrainian farmers, Matt and Steve, the couple learns about perogie contests, digging wells, birthing calves, and generally getting along in the country.

---. "Reunion." Ambience. With Robert Seale, Carla Glenn, Steve Arsenych. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK09133T1 or R-9133. [no date] 33:00.

> Three siblings meet after their father's funeral to discuss his estate. Doug is the oldest son. He is bitter at not being named in the will. Despite his

father's having already bought Doug and his pregnant girlfriend a house. The middle child, Billy, has stayed on the farm and hopes to continue to work it. He has inherited all but the home quarter, which was left to his mom. Tracy, the youngest child and only daughter, came home to look out for her mom. Doug disagrees that he got his inheritance early in the form of a house in town and wants to start an orchard in B.C. Tracy and Billy decide to pay Doug, in order to be free of him.

---. "Turbine Time." Morningside. 5 Episodes. Morningside. Each episode approx. 20 minutes. With David Ferry, Gary Farmer, Roger Dunn, Tom Butler, Nancy Palk, Joe Mathieson, Nicole Evans, Wayne Robson, Billy Morasty, Shirley Cheechoo, Eve Crawford, Sharon Lewis, George Mernard, Don McNeil, Kay Hawtree, David Hughes, Judy Sinclair, Shawn Laurence, and James Edmund. Producer/Director Wayne Schmalz. (Drama Series) Executive Producer Barry Morgan. ARCSK14131T1, ARCSK14131T2, ARCSK14131T3, ARCSK14132T1, ARCSK14132T2 or R-14131, R-14132, R-14133, R-14134, R-14135. Produced: 9 March, 1987. Aired: 6 February, 1987. Five episodes, from 10:00 to 15:00.

Sandy is a young bush-pilot who comes to La Ronge to increase his flying hours or "Turbine Time." The 5 episodes track his progress over his first year in the north. He flies fish shipments, drunken tourists/sportsmen, and medivac flights. He learns how stories can get overblown among a story-loving folk, gets experience flying, falls into and out of love, and has re-current visions of an old native man, "Old Crow", who appears to him in visions. Crow tells Sandy he's got Indian blood in him and he should know his stories. Crow tells a creation story through visions.
Sandy's "Legend" is as follows: Sandy *almost* has to divert a medivac flight to land on the highway due to fog on the lake. At the last minute, the fog lifts, and he lands conventionally. By the end of the year (even Sandy tells it this big, to make fun of someone collecting stories from "the north"), the story is he was transporting an axe-murderer (with an axe stuck in his head) who wiped out a whole town on the way to the hospital – the plane is found abandoned on the highway – the pilot and murderer are never seen again.

Danika, Elly. "Jane's Story." Ambience. With Paula Costain, Susan Williamson, Kate Gregg, Stephen Arsenych, Billy Morton, Bill Hugli, and Louise Handford. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14043. 24 June 1996. [no time].

An adaptation of the first chapters of Elly Danika's book Marsh Boden which tells the stories of young women who immigrate to Saskatchewan for work. Ede Walters is what Danika describes as an "interrogator character" who asks pointed questions about her family's past.

Daniels, Greg. "Night Driving." Ambience. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Archives of Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 16 Mar. 1988. 10:00.

A First-Nations couple, Natalie and Robert, are driving to Winnipeg. They are fighting. Robert is nit-picking, chauvinistic, and jealous. They pick up a hitchhiker, Neil. Robert is hungry, so they pull over and have a wiener-roast. Natalie and Robert are still arguing. Neil leaves to find another ride. Natalie leaves Robert behind. Robert follows Neil, thus afflicting Neil with his presence.

Deverell, Rex. "And Did the Dog See This?" Arts à la Carte. With Gordon Tootoosis, Kim McKaw, Grace Adam, Steven Ostenitch, and Gabriel Prendergast. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05340T1. 9 Mar. 1980. 20:00.

Piapot has been jailed for holding the Sun Dance. His grandson, Harry, comes to visit and hears Piapot tell the story of his life. Harry is struggling to fit in at the "Presbyterian Industrial School" where he hopes to "learn a trade." Like Harry, Piapot spent most of his life caught between different cultures, whether as a Cree in the Sioux camp he grew up in, or as a chief trying to come to terms with the advancing hordes of white men, the railroad, and the disappearance of the buffalo. It is unclear at the end of the play if Harry has found comfort in his grandfather's story, but he does leave with a stronger link to his past.

---. "The Composer." Ambience. With Ken Kramer and Michael Scholar. Music by Harold Sherman. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05347T1. 27 Sept. 1980. 15:00.

A Composer wakes to the clock radio and hears a music critic panning his latest creation. The Composer sits at his piano to compose. While working, he imagines himself in the future looking back on a famous life. He uses this future persona to cheer himself up. Along the way, themes of art, self-doubt, and creation are explored.

---. "Love Scenes." Anthology. With Elizabeth Moulton, Ken Kramer, and Gabriel Prendergast. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05361. Jan 1979. 55:00.

Commissioned by CBC for Festival Regina 1978, the play was recorded as performed live. A complex plot unfolds with actors speaking between scenes about love and the characters they are playing. The enacted scenes explore variations of opportunities found and lost in several relationships.

Deverell, Rex and Wayne Schmalz. "The Riel Commission: An Inquiry into the Survival of a People - part 1 of 5." Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 61-79.
First Broadcast on CBC National Radio starting 12 May 1985.

---. "The Riel Commission: An Inquiry into the Survival of a People." CBC Regina.

Local and national CBC networks. Produced by Wayne Schmaltz. Featuring Donald Sutherland. ARCSK09688T1 through ARCSK09692T1 or R-9688 through R-9692. Recorded March 1985. 5 episodes of approximately 55:00.

Best defined as a feature rather than a drama or a documentary, this epic explores the state of the Métis people in Canada in 1985, paying specific attention to the history of Louis Riel and the Métis uprising of 1885. It utilizes dramatic treatments of historical figures and events, recorded "testimony" of Métis speakers at commission-like meetings held by the CBC to gather stories, taped interviews and events outside of studio. All are tied together by the post-recorded Commissioner, played by Donald Sutherland, who sometimes speaks as himself.

Dueck, Amy. "Old Beginnings." Gallery. Produced by Kelley Jo Burke. Recorded at CBC Saskatchewan, mixed 27 April 2001. 10:00.

Note: Youth Drama Competition Winner.

Lisa and Josie are on an Outdoor Education class field trip. Marti and Josie rekindle a friendship that fell as a casualty to Josie's quest for cooler friends. Marti helps Josie overcome her fear of water, acquired when Josie's dad drown after falling through the ice while ice fishing.

Ewan, Dolores. "Alexander the Great." Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience. Archives of Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. [no date.] 8:00.

A children's drama about a bad King who gambles away his castle then tries to rob the Queen to buy it back. Alexander, the Queen's new pet dragon, thwarts the King. The Queen punishes the King by making him give Alexander manicures. The King learns that gambling, stealing, and trying to trick your wife will get you nowhere in life.

Fiddler, Mirelda. "My Indian Brother." With Dion Tootoosis, Thomas Russen, Raine Morren, Jennifer Fiddler, Tessa Deneme, Andrea Menard. Director Kelley Jo Burke. Producer Mirelda Fiddler. Recorded live in the CBC SK Galleria: 18 June, 2004. Aired 21 June 2004. 50:00.

The play is an unflinching look at racism in First Nations dating, based on Mirelda's experiences as a Métis woman. Madeline opens the play narrating an introduction to her brother, Tony, calling him "the Cree Casanova." Madeline and Tony share a father. Madeline's mother was white. Tony's mother was Cree. Tony is a shameless womanizer, but eventually falls in love with a Métis woman, Dana. The relationship gets serious. Linda, one of Tony's past loves, accuses Tony of turning his back on his community. Unaware that Dana is within earshot, Tony later tells Madeline that "We can't keep marrying out, or we'll disappear." The exchange hurts both Dana and Madeline. Madeline trumps Tony's racist musings with "I just thought that people who love each other make a good home." The play ends with Tony trying to make up with Dana, but it is unclear if their relationship will recover.

Friederick, Charles. "The Decision Maker." Ambience. With Victor Young, Ken Kramer, Michael Scholar, Grant Lowe, and Dianne Fox. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK09124T1 or R-9124. 25 Feb. 1984. [no time].

Maxwell returns from holiday to find the company he works for in disarray. While Maxwell was gone, the company foundered and a "Decision Maker" took over operations. The executives are out on the ledges of the building, unable to decide to jump. The G.M. is doing junior work. G.M blames "those damned socialist unions" for killing capitalism. The G.M. is fired and joins the other "blue-blooded bums" on the ledge.

Gault, Connie. "The Balloon Man." Ambience. With Francis Hyland, Rob Roy, Kent Allen, Dennis Dodds, Gaye Burgess, and Tom Rooney. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13544. 3 Apr. 1993. [no time].

A retired couple, Danielle and Eric, are at poolside drinking. Their daughter, a sculptor, is estranged from them. Danielle, however, continues to write letters to her. Lewis, a former lover of Danielle's, enters. The three reminisce and exchange barbs about the past, fidelity, power, testicles, happiness, cheerfulness, and parenthood. Title refers to a story Danielle tells of a man on a bus who opened a briefcase full of balloons and nuzzled them. Danielle has an epiphany that those balloons represented his testicles.

---. "Dead Awake." Ambience. With June Mayhew, Bill Hugli, and David Beairsto. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK10947T1. 14 June 1988. [no time].

Three characters converse regarding the life and death of Alberto, an insomniac who has committed suicide after six sleepless years. The three characters, Alberto's wife, doctor, and best friend appear to be attempting to convince themselves that what happened to Alberto was no one's fault. At the play's end, his wife gives back Alberto's collection of sleeping aids -- gifts from the doctor and best friend. They are all loud. Alberto's wife is left alone in blissful silence.

---. "Snow Dream." Ambience. With Nona Luchenski, Chip Chuipka, Kate Gregg, and Connie Gault. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK11651T1. 19 Nov. 1988. 20:00.

The central character, Beth, has suffered a stroke that has affected her speech. Her husband and the nurse cannot understand what she is trying to say, but the listener can. Frustrated by her inability to communicate, Beth eventually finds companionship by dreaming of her Grandmother.

---. "Vance and Verna." Ambience. With Susan Williamson, Sharon Bakker, Karen Wood, Kate Gregg, and Ian Nestaguard Paul. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK12783T1 or R - 12783. 16 February 1991. 32:13.

A blind mother and daughter, Mrs. McGowan and Verna respectively, reminisce about the events surrounding the years-before disappearance of Vance, Mrs. McGowan's son and Verna's brother. Mrs. McGowan has offered a reward for information, and Verna is helping screen out frauds. Every potential source of information has been a fraud. Verna tells the story again of how Vance, shoe store manager, disappeared from Saskatoon soon after his wife, Beebee, went to Regina to film a movie. The only trace of Vance was his car abandoned outside of Calgary. During the course of remembering, Verna tells her mother about her weekly bridge-club sex-romps and that she's happy with her life. Verna tells her mother that this will be the last time she will meet with potential informants.

Grace, Susan Andrews. "Moira, Molly, Mairead." With Wendy Agnew, Sharon Bakker, Susan Williamson, Lew Weatherall, Stephen Gregg, Stephen Arsenych, and Jim Timmins. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14158T4 or R-14161. Recorded at CBC Regina 9 Nov. 1988. [no time].

A mystical story about the spiritual link between Mairead, a woman in 1500s Ireland, and her descendents Moira, and daughter Molly (referred to as Crone, Mother, and Maiden). Molly learns from Mairead that "It's women who know things, Molly" and "All you have to do is wish and you'll affect the future." Molly meets her parents in the past and wishes them well.

Hunt, Dennis. "Growing." Ambience. With Henry Woolf and Susan Williamson. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience Archives of Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. [no date]. 9:00.

A fantastic tale of Jack, of beanstalk fame, and Jane, A.K.A. Miss Muffet, who are now retired and trying to adapt to old age. Every day, Jack climbs the beanstalk to bellow his anger over being old and tired to "the Giant", who could be a god-figure. The play ends with Jack and Jane deciding to climb the beanstalk together.

Innes, David. "Air Ambulance." Summerfallow. With Peg Dixon, Beth Lockerby, Hugh Webster, and Douglass Master. Producer Frank Nicolson. ARCSK10603T3. CBK, Saskatchewan. 16 July 1960. 30:00.

This docudrama tells the story of the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance Service in its sixteenth year of operation. A reporter character named Jack Craig arrives to interview members of the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance Service. They provide Jack with stories and facts about the service while the listener follows the pilot and air ambulance nurse on several flights to transport sick and injured patients to Regina for treatment. The listener learns the air ambulance now flies about 1,000 missions a year and has carried over 12,000 patients in its sixteen-year history, from polio victims in need of an iron lung, to injured farmers, and women delivering babies. The play concludes with Jack dramatically pronouncing, "This is a story

worth telling." The real air ambulance crew-members that the story was based upon are then interviewed in studio. The interviewees highlight the need for the air ambulances "in Saskatchewan. The distances are so great. It's not that rural hospitals aren't good, but some patients need specialist treatment."

Jordan, Terry. "Movie Dust." Ambience. With Kent Allen and Burgandy Code. Producer/director Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK12849T1 or R-1284. 22 June, 1991. [no time].

Gene and Katie fall in love as "kids." Gene's dad owns the drive-in at which Katie works in the concession. The title refers to Gene's opening line to Katie. He asks her how she moves in the dust of the movies. He imagines that the pictures (on the screen above her head) need to go somewhere after they are projected, so they dissolve and fall down on her. Gene and Katie plan to get married, but Gene leaves on their wedding day. He returns one year later to find Katie at his brother's house (she given in to his advances in a "moment of weakness"). Gene chops down a huge sign posts onto his brother's car and house.

Kerr, Don. "Ain't No Cure for Love." Ambience. With Paula Costain, Weston McMillian, Gaye Burgess. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK14043T1. 6 May 1996. 15:00.

A love story told largely over the phone via phone messages (ingoing and outgoing). Kimberly has left the farm to find a life in the city. She meets Darren, a young socialist/video store clerk. A somewhat stormy romance blossoms. Kimberly becomes pregnant. Her parents suggest abortion. The last message heard is the outgoing message of the household of Kimberly, Darren, and David (their new son).

---. "I'm All Ears." Ambience. With Marina Stephenson-Kerr. Producer Wayne Schmaltz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13579T1. [no date]. 17:00.

A monologue of one woman who is thinking and singing about her work-life, family-life, and dating-life. She wants a better life than what she has now, but hasn't given up hope on things improving. Her motto is "Don't look, Listen. You don't know what you're missing."

---. "My Town." Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 108-120. First broadcast on Speaking Volumes, CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 30 Oct. 1988. [no time].

Set against the musical background of Duke Ellington's *Blood Count*, the author longs for the Saskatoon of his past. He is discouraged by the demolition of old buildings to build new ones. His fight against development parallels his fight against aging.

---. "Railroad Blues." Ambience. With Don Kerr and Lou Weatherall. Producer

Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK12776T1. 5 January, 1991. [no time].

A dramatized poem exploring the romance of train travel one year after VIA rail passenger service was cut. The narrative rhythm is very train-like as the two narrators lament and reminisce as the passenger train between Edmonton and Saskatoon makes its last run.

Kondratoff, Nolan and Jason Shabatoski. "LIBERAL MAN: 3-2-1 SEPARATION!." Gallery. Produced by Kelley Jo Burke. Recorded at CBC Saskatchewan. Mixed 19 May, 1999. 10:00.

Liberal Man, Jean Chrétien's after-dark-alter-ego, fights the separatist threat with the help of his sidekick, Liberal Lass, A.K.A. Sheila Copps. Upon hearing their arch-nemesis Separatist Man has stolen rocket fuel to separate Quebec into the sky, they rush to their car, the Liberal Bandwagon, to thwart him. Liberal Man and Liberal Lass overcome many obstacles like the *Referendum Ray*, *Sovereignty Sleeping Gas* and being forced to watch Canadian Documentaries of Preston Manning and Joe Clark discussing uniting the right while nude.

Margoshes, Dave. "Gag." With Lew Weatherall, Bill Vickers, Connie Schiffle, Sara Haywood, and Stephen Hilton. Producer/Director – Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14083T1or R-14083. December 1990. [no time].

Wally is a gag-writer. He once wrote for "the greats": Jack Benny, Jackie Gleason, Jimmy Durante. Now, he writes gags for nudie-mag cartoonists and burlesque club intros. Wally meets Jesus, who is unsatisfied with the confusion and misrepresentation surrounding his teachings and wants to make a come-back on Johnny Carson. Wally is to write gags for Jesus' comeback. Wally comes up with a sight gag for Carson; Jesus slips on a banana peel, falls, but never lands. It's to be a comic miracle to show the world that "it's just as easy to be kind."

Marken, Ron. "Almost Like Being a Man." Arts à la Carte. With Sharon Wall, Kim McCaw, Linda Huffman, and Carole Gay Bell. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK(R-5341). 22 Mar. 1980. 25:00.

The arrival of a touring company of Ibsen's then-controversial play *A Doll's House* causes a stir in the young city of Saskatoon circa 1909. The controversy of the play is paralleled in the home of Elizabeth. She is a local banker's wife who lands a bit-part in the show. Alan, her husband, is mortified that she would be in such an immoral show. The controversy surrounding the play is that a woman would walk out on her family and home. Marken's play ends in a similar manner to Ibsen's. Elizabeth insists she will be in the play and that things will have to change in her house before she will return.

---. "The Squire's Bride." Arts à la Carte. With Ken Kramer, Gabriel Prendergast, Deborah Stott, and Gariston Christjohn. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK05333T1 or R-5333. Jan 1980. 10:00.

Based on the Norwegian Folk Tale by P.C. Asbjörnsen in which a rich and ugly squire desires a beautiful farmer's daughter, but he is tricked into marrying a horse instead.

Menard, Andrea. "The Velvet Devil." Ambience. With Andrea Menard. Music co-written by Robert Walsh. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience Archives of Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 2001. 50:00.

Note: This one-woman show has been produced as a radio play, as a stage play, and will soon be released in film form.

A Métis singer, Velvet Laurent A.K.A. *The Velvet Devil*, returns home from Toronto to perform a benefit show in honour of her deceased mother, Willy Laurent. Velvet left home to seek stardom and found it. Once in Toronto, she made it big on the radio, loved and lost, and made the most of her shot at fame. By running away to Toronto Velvet removed herself from her Métis heritage, her Métis community, her family (mostly her mother), and her mother's values. Singing was sacred to Willy, and Velvet feels guilty about using her voice for profit. When Velvet speaks of her mother's voice, she says Willy Laurent "sang to talk to God"; Velvet, however feels she sang "to talk to the devil." Finally, by singing her mother's songs, Velvet finds a measure of peace.

Misfeldt, James. "The Boarding House." Ambience. With Duncan Fraser and Louise Hardford. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCHSK10155T1. 31 Jan. 1987. 20:00.

It appears a medical student and a waitress are conversing in a boarding house. They talk about life, death, socialism, class-ism, religion, and dime store philosophy for a while before the man gets violent, tries to assault the woman, rips her blouse... but it all dissipates in a confusing turn of events when the scene appears to be revealed as an audition for some kind of play.

---. "My Place is Here." Ambience. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan Regina. ARCSK14096 or R-14096. 10 Apr. 1989. [no time].

Father and son, Itch, are on the road. Itch insists they are going camping. He repeatedly warns his dad not to drink. His father, however, starts to muse about sticking around the town. Their Car needs fixing. Itch and a waitress start up a conversation. Itch reveals his dream of traveling. The waitress repeats "My place is here." The play seems to be a pre-curser to the *Walk the Line* (below).

---. "Walk the Line" Episodes 1 through 5. ARCSK14074T1 or R-14074. 19 Apr. 1985. [no times.]

Itch is older and living in the small town were he and his father stayed after their broke-down (in *My Place is Here*). Itch's dad is drinking again.

Itch is haunted by his mother's drowning death. Everyone wonders whether or not it was suicide. Itch decides to run away to avoid getting stuck in the little town like his dad.

Mitchell, Ken. *The Shipbuilder*. Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1990.
Mitchell's fictionalized account of the life and trials of Tomas Sukanen, whom Mitchell renames Jaanus Karkulainen. It traces Jaanus' epic dream (of building a ship on which he can sail home to Finland), Jaanus's fights with his neighbours, and Jaanus's perceived madness that lead to his commitment to a psychiatric hospital.

Morgan, Martha. "The Encapsulation of Marvin Beale." Ambience. With David Beairsto, Robert Seale, Jean Freeman, Josh Meisner, Bill Hugli, Christian Scott, Richard Mortimer, John Buller, Stephen Fielden, and Kim Hedoborski. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK09510T1 or R-9510. 14 Sept. 1985. 30:00.
Marvin is overwhelmed by junk mail. At home, his frustration leads to Marvin getting into a fight with the paperboy and the paperboy's father. At work, Marvin throws the photocopier out of a window to prevent a co-worker from copying a joke. In court for his actions, Marvin is sentenced to counseling. Marvin's court-appointed psychologist is an inept fool who spouts trite pop-psychology while not listening to Marvin. Uncured of his obsession, Marvin burns his junk mail at home. The resulting blaze burns down his garage. Marvin returns to court and is sentenced -- at the suggestion of his psychologist -- to work delivering flyers.

---. "Hats, Gloves, and Tuna Sandwiches." Ambience. With Jane Casson, Kent Allen, and Lew Weatherall. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK11785T1 or R-11785. 18 Feb. 1989. 25:00.
Two Golden-agers, Dorothy and Agnes, augment their diets by grabbing sandwiches from weddings, funerals, lectures, etc. While at the funeral of a stock broker, Dorothy and Agnes make a comment in front of Mr. Wallace, the stockbroker's murderer. Wallace misconstrues the comment and thinks that the two old ladies are onto his plan to embezzle money, kill his partner and steal his partner's wife. Wallace kills Dorothy. He would have killed Agnes too, but the police arrived too soon and thwart his plan. Wallace is discovered hiding in Agnes's closet. Agnes remains ignorant as to what she and Dorothy set in motion, thinking Wallace was angry about their stealing of the funeral sandwiches.

---. "The Medicine Show" 5 Episodes. With Karen Barker, David Beairsto, Jane Roth Casson, Ken Kramer, Louise Handford, Darlene Bradley, Chris Dodson, Elizabeth Ebbels, Kate Gregg, Margaret Martin, Rita Deverell, Stephen Gregg, and Bill Hugli. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina.

ARCSK14149T1 through ARCSK14149T5 or R-14149 through R-14153. 23-27 May, 1988. [no times]

It's the 1930s and the Depression rages. A medicine show (complete with the world's oldest woman, "Princess Wakahoni", an exotic dancer, and the medicine showman's blind son, Bud) comes to town and causes a stir in the ordinarily routine town of Stony Gap. Alice leaves long-time suitor, Charles, to try life on her own terms. Her mother is much affronted. The medicine-show-man, the Professor, loses his wagon to a fire started by a careless mob started it after an 80-year-old woman died after purchasing medicine show ointments. The Professor leaves, but comes back for Alice, wins over her mother, and starts a used car business in town.

---. "Re-Runs." Ambience. With Anne Wright, David Beairsto, Lew Weatherall, Stephen Arsenych, Jean Freeman, Stephen Fielding, Greg Morley, Bill Vickers, Gabriel Prendergast, Susan Kyle, and Bill Hugli. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK10049T1. 6 Dec. 1986. 20:00.
Note: ARCSK14076T1 contains a version of "Re-Runs" with an extended introduction. In it, men are dealing with women rioting over the new Adam and Eve info. There's even a preacher who seems to be doing a Tommy Douglas impression.

An academic discovers an ancient scroll that states that it was Adam, not Eve, who first bit the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. World upheaval ensues as male dominated thought-patterns are rejected and replaced. A project to delve into ancestral memory follows. Susan is regressed back to Eve. Daniel records what she says. It is revealed that Eve was created first. Then the serpent told Eve to ask for a mate. God warns Eve that man will bring war, destruction, and pain to the earth. Eve convinces God to relent and man is unleashed upon the earth. Eve admits that "I have brought the scourge of man to the world. But such a sweet scourge." As the experiment continues, divine power takes over. The program can't be shut down. Daniel and Susan wake up in the garden of Eden. They are Adam and Eve. Eve takes charge, saying, "Here, have a fig leaf. Things are going to be a little different this time around."

---. "The Tape Recorder." Ambience. With Robert Clinton, Brenda Bassinet, and Kent Allen. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05355T1 or R-5355. 29 Nov. 1980. 20:00.

Mavis and Ron visit Ron's wealthy and eccentric uncle, Claude. Claude talks incessantly about all of his obsessions, like the plants in his conservatory. Ron visits to ensure his inheritance. Mavis barely tolerates these visits and jokes about killing Claude for his fortune. Claude goes on vacation, leaving Ron to water the plants. Claude sends back tape-recorded letters so Ron can play them for the plants. The more Ron listens to the tapes, the more he behaves like Claude. Mavis cannot stand this change and storms out of the house, after securing the knowledge that

Claude's oleander leaves are poisonous if brewed into tea. It is left unclear whether or not Mavis will use her deadly knowledge.

Morrissey, Kim. "Peter Gzowski, Peter Gzowski." Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 1-12. First Broadcast on State of the Arts. 2 Feb. 1986. 17:00.

Note: Kim Morrissey also appears as Kim Dales.

Pam, a lonely and struggling actress, wallows in misery and delusion at home. She fantasizes about being interviewed and then visited by Peter Gzowski.

Mueller, Robin. "Just a Cup of Tea." Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. [no date]. 12:00.

Jack and Jill are walking home after a date. The audience hears both their spoken, polite conversation, and their inner monologues, which are much more honest and lustful. They proceed to Jack's apartment for Just a Cup of Tea. The inner monologues get steamier. They are in the bedroom before their spoken words actually match their inner desires. The play ends as things get physical.

Mutimer, Ernie. "The Idyll of John Murdoch." Ambience. With Stephen Arsenych, Jean Freeman, Michael Scholar, Ken Kramer, John Buller, Robert Seale, and Kim Hedoborski. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK09504 or R-9504. 27 July 1985. [no time].

John, a farmer, is recalling the change from "the good old days" to the "good new days." John speaks of the day Hilda, his wife, almost died of an undisclosed terminal illness (perhaps cancer). As she lay in the farmhouse dying, John went out to the meadow and heard a voice. Then, the world changed. To John's delight, the following events took place: factory farms were replaced by local, land-loving farmers; strip mining for coal abandoned as people turned to cleaner power sources; peace breaks out across the world; and the radio stations switch from loud, angry rock music to calm, classical music; transportation also evolved - zeppelins replace jets and cars, motorboats, skidoos, and buses are replaced with bikes, canoes, horses and trolleys respectively. John is brought back to reality near the end of the play. The world John has been remembering is his own mental creation. Hilda did die. The shock drove John to retreat into his own, perfect and pleasant, mental reality. He retains awareness of reality while receiving shock treatments. When John hears traffic outside the window, he suffers a fatal heart attack. As John dies, the listener follows him back into his perfect world. He returns to Hilda on the farm in his perfect world.

Nelson, Greg. "Johnny Colours." Ambience. With James O'Shea, Marina Stephenson

Kerr, Susan Williamson, Karen Turner, David Marr, Elizabeth Brown, Lew Weatherall, and Bill Dow. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13568T1. 12 June 1993. [no time].

Johnny and Annie are living together in Saskatoon. John comes home drunk. Annie throws things at him. Johnny leaves with a head wound that attracts much comment throughout the rest of the play. Annie follows him out the door and falls on the stairs, breaking her leg in three places. Johnny wakes up at Donna's place, after a drunken one-night-stand that he can't remember. Annie wakes up in the hospital. Johnny goes home and hears from the landlord, Mr. Johnson, that Annie is in the hospital. In the Hospital, Annie meets Shirley. Shirley fans Annie's suspicion and anger over Johnny's infidelities. When Johnny arrives at the hospital, they fight again. Johnny re-injures his cracked skull and Annie adds a broken wrist to her injuries. Despite the pain, they exchange I-love-you's at the end of the play and embrace, amidst "Ouches."

Mary Pattison, "Destination Earth." Prairie Playhouse. Producer: Emrys Jones, Winnipeg, Eastern Network. ARCSK11824T4. August 21, 1952. 30:00.

A Martian Family is trying to raise enough money to get back to Mars. The Father tries to sell a science fiction story to a Publisher. The Publisher and his nearly-estranged girlfriend stay with the Martians for a weekend and the Martians and humans explore questions of life, love, and the nature of mankind regarding civility and barbarity. Martians see Earthlings as being two-headed, both destructive and creative. The Martians were attracted to Canada because Canadians have spent years failing to define a typical Canadian. Thus, the Martians hoped to blend in more easily.

---. "Gold Is Where You Find It." Summer Fallow. Producer R. S. James. Toronto, Trans-Canada Network. ARCSK11827. September 19, 1955. 30:00.

An elementary school class visits the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon. They learn about the museum and Saskatchewan history from: the museum board chair, Joe Phelps; an retired thresher, Mr. Nelson; and their bus-driver, Mr. Peterson.

Phelps reveals the facts about the museum. The museum building is an old hangar from Swift Current. 30,000 visitors have toured the museum since it opened the year before. The threshers' reunion is going to become an annual event. New household displays are being set up. The museum is funded by grants, admission charges, and the provincial government. Curious displays include a stone with a fossil leaf print 60 million years old, ladies side saddle, 1903 Eaton's catalogue, Red River Cart with authentic squeak, cars, even a 1938 Stanley Steamer car.

Threshing stories from Nelson, some events are heard as dramatized memories. When the children comment on the antiquated looking thrashing machines, Nelson says that in 50 years, current machinery will seem old. "Machines change, people don't." Nelson tells of his parent's

homestead and its machines, from ground breaking to seeding, sweeps, and thresher crews. He also talks about a young boy who grew up wanting to run a threshing outfit. On the threshing crew the fireman was up at 3:30 a.m.; the pitchers started at 5:30; and everyone finished at dark. Nelson also describes how the threshers used the steam whistle as a form of communication through the field. Nelson leaves. Peterson tells kids that Nelson was a thresher-engineer, until he "tangled with a belt" and lost use of his hand. Nelson was the boy who dreamed of running a thresher.

Philpot, Wendy. "Breathless Air." Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. [no date.] 19:00.

The listener fades between two monologues, a man dying in India and his daughter, flying from India to introduce the dying man to her son – his grandson. They muse on life, death, and family connections. The man dies before the daughter can see him. She takes comfort in how she is the connection between her son and her father.

Popov, Mischa. "Casual Fridays." Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. [no date, time].

A comedic tale of corporate conformity that traces the failures of Wally to fit in at the office. Wally feels pressured to conform to the dress code of casual Friday – which says that no one needs to wear a shirt or tie on Fridays. Wally is accused of "non-compliance with the non-conformance standards of the last day of the work week." Thus, he is pressured into conforming, taking his shirt off like the rest of the office, to meet the appropriate level of non-conformance. But Wally also arrives shirtless on Monday, for which he's put down. Eventually, casual Fridays run out of control. Civility erodes. The last scene is a Friday where decorum has degenerated to the point of drums beating while the office-workers hunt their boss through the halls. They plan to do unspeakable things to him with a stapler.

Quandt, James. "Arctic Landscapes." Arts à la Carte. With Ken Kramer and Linda Huffman. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05336T1. 2 Feb. 1980. 28:00.

Two characters deal with death in a Saskatchewan winter. The narration flows back and forth between the thoughts of two characters, a man and woman. The man is seeking refuge under his snowmobile, which is out of gas. The man is stranded far away from his work-camp. As the man waits to be rescued, he fears he will freeze to death alone. The apparently doomed man muses on death and his insignificance before it. Eventually, the man is found and rescued by his co-workers. His isolation is ended, and he is saved by his community.

In the woman's monologue, she recalls her son's drowning after he tobogganed onto thin ice and fell through. She describes her son sinking into the water "like a figure on a piece of paper being slowly erased." Her

son wore a yellow snowsuit. The colour yellow becomes a colour of death. She also tells of how her husband found his grandfather dead in the garage with a yellow scarf stuffed into the tailpipe of his car. The woman's loneliness is not only a longing for her lost son. She says grief has emptied her and driven her away from her husband, who "cannot put his arms around the shell I carry." In contrast to the man under his snowmobile, who is trying desperately to stay awake, this mournful woman longs for sleep. The listener is left wondering whether or not she is contemplating suicide.

---. "The Sea." Ambience. With Linda Huffman, Stephen Arsenych, and Trulie McLeod. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05353T1. 8 Nov. 1980. 16:00.

The play is a series three of monologues. A mother, her son, and his wife Nora muse about their lives, their relationships with each other, and their bleak vacation by the sea.

The mother is first to speak in the sea-side house. She hates this vacation. It is an annual torture. The mother is angrier at her daughter-in-law than the vacation. She is jealous of this young woman. The old woman is afraid of Nora's youth and strength, fearing, "She will destroy us with her hard body." There also is a sense of resentment over losing her son to Nora. The old woman complains of Nora using "words I cannot understand."

The second monologue is the son, speaking on the beach. He is watching his wife, Nora, swimming, "Like a little flag out there on the sea." He puzzles over how Nora can seem so distant; even when she "surrounds me with her hard, sweet skin it always seems I'm looking at her from a distance." The rift between Nora and her husband is undeniable and an inability to communicate is a major cause of it. Nora's husband claims she "uses her sentences, hard, sharp, and crusted like weapons." Nora's separation from her husband is highlighted by his mantra-like repeated phrase, "if she drowns, I won't be able to save her." It sounds prayer-like. But just what outcome he could be praying for is picked up in the third monologue.

The final monologue is Nora's thoughts as she swims in the sea. Nora describes the sea as a warm, nurturing place. She puts a darker spin on her husband's thought as she wonders, "can they see me? Are they desperately afraid I might drown? Do they secretly wish it?" Nora is also aware of how the others see her, asking, "What of Nora? She is the hard one, the impenetrable one."

As the characters muse, they reveal a source of tension. The old woman sent her son and Nora to Europe to find the old woman's missing runaway daughter. The couple soon exhaust their leads and use the time as a free vacation. The old woman never forgives them. No resolution is in sight as the play ends.

---. "The Silence." Ambience. With Beth Lischeron and David Beairsto. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK10150 or R-10150. 10 Aug. 1985. 30:00.

A reporter comes to interview Frau Klause, an older German widow who lives on her dead husband's farm in Alberta. Franz, Frau Klause's husband, froze to death after falling and injuring himself in the farmyard. After Franz's death, it became public that he was a German SS officer guilty of war crimes. The interviewer is writing a story about Franz. He wants Frau Klause to talk about her husband. Frau Klause remembers the silence of her neighbourhood as people disappeared in Nazi-occupied Europe. She learned the value of silence after the disappearance of her parents in Germany. She recalls, "I soon found that to speak certain words, certain questions, were dangerous. It is a useful thing, you know, to learn to keep silent." After moving to Alberta, she observed the silence of neighbours: "they might have been suspicious [of Franz's past] but, like me, they kept it to themselves."

After the reporter leaves, Frau Klause reveals (in a monologue) that Franz physically and emotionally tortured her for years after they moved to Canada. She watched her husband die alone in the snow. Frau Klause is free of the hell of her abusive husband. She now lives in self-imposed exile in the house where she lived that hell.

Robinson, J. Jill. "The Fall." Producer Kelley Jo Burke. Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. [no date]. 16:30.

The Fall deals with the irrevocably damaged relationship between mother and daughter. Daughter is on what she calls "duty visit number seven" trying to "face her mother; stand her mother." Once, she saw her mom as glamorous, loving, and ideal. Now her mom is aging, planning for death, and angry. The mother-daughter relationship has deteriorated to the point where the daughter talks about seeking rebirth by another mother. She speaks of the wish to "drive myself into someone else's womb" because her mother has "made me unfit for human consumption." Daughter does reach back to her mother, but only to heap blame and bitterness upon her.

Robinson, Mansel. "The Education of Annie McBride." Ambience. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK14282T1. 5 episodes. [no date/time]. through ARCSK14282T5 or R-14282 through R-14286. 26-29 June, 1995.

60-year-old Annie McBride gets a visit (a night-time break-in) from her great-nephew Zach, the grandson of her estranged sister Flo. Annie and Flo disagreed over the politics surrounding the Regina Riot. Flo was dating an On to Ottawa Trekker, Zachychuck, and Annie was dating an RCMP officer. Annie, a retired teacher, is a hard woman who believes "history is written by the winners" but the history of "the Depression was written by the losers." A conversation with Zach starts her questioning her beliefs. Based on *The Heart as it Lived*.

--- . "Ghost Trains." Gallery. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. With Robert Benz, Scott

Patrick, and Stewart MacDougall. Songs by Robinson/MacDougall. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 2001. 52:00.

An adaptation of Robinson's Fringe play of the same name. A son returns home to visit his dying father, a retired brakeman. The son is helping his father die as best as he can. After the funeral, the son takes his father's ashes on a short ride in a stolen locomotive, thus making him a train-robber.

---. Rock 'n' Rail: Ghost Trains and Spitting Slag. Saskatoon: Thistledown Press. 2002.

Sapergia, Barbara. "Double Take." Ambience. With Ann Marie Corman, Anne Wright, David Beairsto, and Gabriel Prendergast. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK09408T1. 17 Nov. 1984. 25:00.

This is a fantastic tale of two odd sisters. They live a secluded life. Although their father has been dead for years, he can communicate with them psychically. He is heard as "music from the spheres." They are alchemists trying to turn lead into gold. They speak their own language, finish each other's sentences and even feel each other's sensations. The sisters' uniquely ordered lives are disrupted by two men. First comes the gluttonous Dr. Farrol, a psychologist who enters their home (without permission and despite protests) seeking knowledge of the two odd sisters. He offers them money in exchange for performing experiments on them. The sisters refuse and send him on his way. Next enters the Reverend Henry, a nature-loving, lederhosen-wearing, biblical purist whom the sisters try to seduce in order to have children. Farrol interrupts their seduction. Henry runs. Farrol falls in lust with the sister's cooking and they all agree to live together. Henry returns and a fight breaks out. The fight destroys the sister's experiment, but not before gold is produced. Farrol steals the gold and leaves. The women are dejected because the explosion has cost them their special psychic abilities. They despair as the play ends, "It's so terribly silent."

---. "Eating Avocados." Ambience. With Pamela Haig, Burgundy Code, Gabriel Prendergast, and Elizabeth McRobbie. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13244. 30 Nov. 1991. 20:00.

This is the story of a single Mother, Rita, and her daughter, Brandi. Brandi has an eating disorder (anorexia). By drinking only Diet Coke, she had gone from 130 pounds to 85 pounds and may need hospitalization. Rita expresses her frustrations to her therapist. Eventually, Brandi starts hallucinating and locks herself in her room. Rita forces her way in and vows to be more active in saving Brandi.

---. "Grandma's Foot." Ambience. With Jackie MacLeod, Allan Stratton, Syme Jago, James Brewer, and Kent Allen. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05350T1. 18 Oct. 1980. 13:00.

The play opens in a shoe store where Grandma Luba and her granddaughter are using a "Shoe-Fitting Fluoroscope." Luba is having trouble finding a comfortable pair of shoes. Grandma tells the story of her foot. The listener travels back in time into the memories of Grandma Luba as a young woman. Most of the play is spent in her memories, with occasional questions from granddaughter bringing the listener back to the play's present. When Luba was a young woman in Sweetwater, in the Dirt Hills, she injured her foot. She was scared of going to town to see the doctor. When she could no longer bear weight on the foot, her husband insisted she seek medical attention. In the hospital, the doctor decided to amputate the foot for fear of gangrene. Luba feared her life would be over without a foot. The doctor tried to sell her on a wooden replacement, but Luba dismissed the option. Luba then tricked the doctor into letting her go home to see to her house and children before losing her foot. Luba stayed at home and sought the help of a healer woman. After one month of poultices, the foot healed. The doctor seemed unable to accept healing outside of his institution. Luba laughs when remembering the doctor's letters warning of dire consequences, "You are going to *die*, Mrs. Petreskue, ha, ha" (Sapergia, "Grandma's Foot"). She kept her foot, but it is slightly malformed and she has trouble finding comfortable shoes.

---. "Harvest of the Sun." With Vernon Behl, Sharon Bakker, Ken Kramer, Stephen Arsenych, Kent Allen, Jane Mayhew. Original Music Rob Bryanton. Producer Director Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK14162T2 or R-11463. Recorded 13 Jan. 1989. 24:06.

A futuristic science fiction piece with overtones of environmental activism in which David, a deaf boy, can feel the energy of the land. He lives with his mother, Signe, and uncle, Tomas, on the last stretch of virgin prairie in Canada. They have developed a new strain of Durum, Sunterra, derived from prairie grasses. Sunterra could help reclaim the prairie from the over-farming that is turning other places into wastelands. Mr. Dragland, a man with mechanical arms and legs, seeks to destroy their farm and the new wheat. He runs a huge farm with robots and computers. David faces down Dragland and shuts down his machines.

---. "Old Crocks." Arts à la Carte. With Elizabeth Molton, David Miller, Beth Lischeron, Kent Allen, and Michael Scholar. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05343T1. 12 Mar. 1980. 20:00.

The story is told through Lorraine, a twenty-three year old patient. The whole play takes place in her room at Fort San. The story unfolds both through Lorraine's dialogue with other characters who enter her room, and her own inner monologue. The play begins with the revelation that Lorraine and Eddy, a 43-year-old farmer and family man, have been having an affair while "chasing cure." Eddy is responding well to treatment and will soon return home to his farm and family. Lorraine is not responding well to treatment and is soon to undergo painful surgery

(thoracoplasty). Eddy can't wait to be released and is full of pastorally ideal memories of home, "the taste of wheat, the feel of sunshine" and being able to "plant my first crop in 5 years." Lorraine expresses fears over the thought of returning home. She has heard tales of patients being released from the sanatorium and returning home only to be "treated like a walking plague." When talking to herself, Lorraine hints that she could be pregnant. Lorraine feels a baby is safe from TB as long as it is inside her, isolated within her womb. But she resolves never to hold the baby when it is born. Lorraine would rather it be put directly into the preventorium. Lorraine is sick, alone and left with little hope.

Schmalz, Wayne ed. Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Regina, Coteau: 1990.

Schroeder, Andreas. "Dustship Glory" 5 Episodes. Producer Wayne Schmalz, Regina. Five episodes. With Ken Kramer, Lew Weatherall, Kate Gregg, Stephen Arsenych, Bill Morton, Rod McIntyre, Stephen Gregg, Kent Allen, Bill Hugli, Chip Chuipka, Vernon Behl, Chris and Allan Dotson, Wendy Gail, Kent Allen, Gabriel Prendergast, and Rick Gorrie. Producer/ Director Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK14154T2-T4, ARCSK14158T1-T2 or R-14155 to R-14159. 19 Sept. 1988. 5 episodes of approximately 15:00.

A dramatic look at the life, creations, demons, and downfall of Tom Sukanen. Over 5 episodes, various people recall their experiences with Sukanen, told through narration and dramatization. They tell the story of his building his ship, trying to winch it to water, and his subsequent commitment to the North Battleford Psychiatric Hospital, where he died.

Seiferling, Stephanie. "Waiting for the Sunrise." Gallery. Produced by Kelley Jo Burke. Recorded at CBC Saskatchewan, mixed 17 June, 2004. 20:00.

"Stephanie's play, 'Waiting for the Sunrise' tells the archetypal story of a teen who chooses popularity over true friendship" (CBC Gallery website <http://sask.cbc.ca/radio/gallery/drama-winners1.html>)

Plot: Boy meets Zoe, an inspiring friend who helps him get better at basketball. He ends up with a scholarship. His team wins city championship. Zoe also gives him advice that helps him win the girl of his dreams (Amanda). He neglects his relationship with Zoe, neglecting her to the point where she disappears. He walks out on the last few seconds of the city championship game because he realizes Zoe's not there. He loves Zoe. But Zoe has left without leaving a phone number or forwarding address. Two years later, he is at college. When he comes to his home town, he expects to see her. He claims it's like 'Waiting for the Sunrise'.

Smith, Robert. "Finney's Pardon." Ambience. With Robert Cosbey, Brian Way, Bill Hugli, Lew Weatherall, Jim Timmins, Steven Arsenych, Gabe Prendergast, and Roscoe Bell. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK11655T1 or R-11655. 17 Dec. 1988. 15:00.

This is a touching and irreverent tale of the death and mourning of Duff Finney, a drunk who dies in a cheap motel. God calls him, but Finney is reluctant to leave with wine costing only three dollars a bottle. Tommy, his best pal, discovers Finney's body. dead and raises an alarm that brings out the best in the fellows of the hotel. They seek a spiritual advisor, but end up with Captain Chip, a new trumpet player for the Salvation Army. Friends mourn Finney as God calls him home.

Sorestad, Glen. "Buffalo Graveyard." With Ken Kramer, Gordon Tootoosis, and Gabriel Prendergast. Producer, Wayne Scmaltz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK08973T3. 21 Nov. 1981. 10:00.

This is an audio art piece best described as a dramatized reading of a poetic history of the death of the buffalo (1870-1893) in Saskatchewan and the bone collection industry that followed.

Stickland, Eugene. "Seven Pairs of Boots." Ambience. With Lew Weatherall and pianist Eleanor May. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK13241T1 or R-13241. 26 Oct. 1991. 10:00.

Musings of what Beethoven may have been thinking about before making the following entry in his journal in March, 1818: "Seven Pairs of Boots." Beethoven muses and seethes about many things, like why he must he too poor to afford more than his one pair of boots. When a stranger commented on the poor state of his footwear, he replied, "My Boot is Ill." He muses on why he must put up with bad boots and idiots. Pondering leads Beethoven to ask himself how many boots does a person need. Beethoven chooses seven:
Brutal - "mean-spirited boots", "angry, snarling around one's ankles"
Sensible – Proper, for asking for more money from patrons
Celestial – out-of-this-world perfect, beautiful boots
Glamorous – for courting: practical, yet urgent and beautiful
for Marrying – wedding boots, imposing, high-gloss, purpose-built
for Burying – while he fears being buried bootless in a pauper's grave, Beethoven notes it "was good enough for Mozart"
Unwearable – when a composition overwhelmed his mind, he retreated to a boot shop. Once inside, he needed an excuse to be there and ordered a pair of boots. They are expensive and unwearable, but he will never get rid of the boots because he remembers inspiration behind them.

--- with Lee Bells (and Don't Mind Us) and David Ferber. "Don't Shoot the Beaver." Ambience. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 2002. 15:00.

This comedy was a prairie-wide co-production written by Eugene Stickland of Alberta, Saskatchewan's Lee Bells with his improvisation troupe *Don't Mind Us*, and David Ferber from Manitoba. Jason leaves the family farm in Saskatchewan for the "promised land" of Calgary, where he gets a job in a call centre. There he meets Kim, who is also planning to

leave for a "promised land" of her own, Toronto. Romance blooms, but is threatened by tensions between Jason's desire to make a go of it in the big city and Kim's desire to move to a bigger city. Kim eventually decides to postpone her move to Toronto in order to continue her relationship with Jason. Her decision is made easier by Jason's Svengali-like farm-boy sex appeal on which the women of the office comment. While Jason is enjoying working in Calgary, he misses home. The farm also misses Jason. Tensions rise as Jason's parents try to keep the farm afloat. Jason's mother has begun acting strangely. She is painting the house, inside and out, with eggs from the chickens. The couple cannot sell their eggs to their regular customers, so she must find another use for them. Unable to seek rational support from his wife, Jason's father phones a farm- stress line. The stress line is run by the company for which Jason now works. Unfortunately, due to a perceived mix-up between the farm-stress line and phone-sex line, Jason's father ends up in a dire predicament. He is discovered nude and on the phone in the barn by his wife who happens to be carrying a basket of surplus eggs. The phone stress line does eventually help Jason and his father. Jason happens to be the operator who takes his father's second call. Before they recognize each other, Jason hears his father's deepest fears and anxieties. Father and son gain understanding and thus grow closer.

Story, Gertrude. "To Do and Endure." Arts à la Carte. With Gabriel Prendergast, Ken Kramer, Joy Coghill, Linda Huffman, Trudy Cameron, and John Buller. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05342T1 or R-5342. 29 Mar. 1980. 26:00.

Part of the history-series *Festival '80 Radio Theatre*, this is the story of three women - Violet McNaughton, Patience Strong, and Norma McGarrity - fighting for women's suffrage in Saskatchewan of 1916. The women want a greater say in government to fight against oppressive dower laws and dismissive property laws and to fight for greater access to healthcare in rural areas. The women go head-to-head with then Premier Walter Scott over whether women should have the right to vote. Scott is adamantly opposed to women voting, but two weeks after Manitoba granted its women the right to vote, the Saskatchewan government followed suit.

Suknaski, Andrew. "Indeo: The Wood Mountain Stampede Intertribal." Ambience. With Ken Kramer. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK012285. 9 June 1990.

A blend of poetry, recorded interviews, and songs of Wood Mountain residents that tell stories of the Wood Mountain area and its stampede, the oldest continuously running rodeo in Saskatchewan (if not Canada). This creates a collage of stories about the early rodeo, Sitting Bull, Bootleggers, and communities coming together.

Szumigalski, Anne and Ilene Albert. "Stories from the Shell." Arts à la Carte. With

Brenda Bassinet, James Brewer, and Jackie MacLeod. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05335T1 or R-5335. 2 Feb. 1980. [no time].

This is a fantastic, fairy-tale like story of a childless couple, John and Mary, who tend a remote lighthouse. One day, they save the life of a mother dolphin, but cannot save the baby dolphin. The dolphin returns with a human baby for the couple. Mary learns she can speak to the dolphin. Everyone lives happily ever after.

Ursell, Geoffrey. "The Adventures of a Lady that's Known as Lou." Episodes 1 through 5. Ambience. With Lucy Peacock, Louise Handford, Victor Young, John Buller, Stephen Arsenych, Grant Lowe, Gabriel Prendergast, Nicole Evans, Steven Walsh, Allan Bratt, Dale Simmons. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK10359T1. 1989. 5 episodes of 20:00.

Overview: In the tunnels beneath an imagined 1920s Moose Jaw, scoundrels smuggle bootlegged liquor, run opium dens, and generally outwit the RCMP and Saskatchewan Provincial Police's undercover officers.

Episode 1: Lou arrives in Moose Jaw on the Soo line. She tries to set up connection with the underworld for her boss, "Al." Everyone assumes she means Al Capone. Lou meets Midge (a midget) who takes Lou into the tunnels under Moose Jaw. There Lou finds rum runners, thieves, hot spring pools, and more. After falling into the hot pool, Lou gets a new wardrobe from stolen dress cache. There, she meets "Low Lie", an almost 7' tall Chinese man who operates an opium den. Lou also meets Mr. Zed – a man always in disguise. Zed wants a deal to ship to "Al" in Chicago so he can buy a farm and build his own curling rink.

Episode 2, *The Fortune Cookie Caper*: Lou continues to infiltrate the Moose Jaw underworld with Midge as her guide. After business lunch with Mr. Z at a Chinese restaurant, Low Lie drugs them, then takes them to a greenhouse. But he dies falling down the stairs, having tripped on his own slippers.

Episode 3, *A Night on the Town*: Dr. Jack Felt, another almost 7'-tall man, takes Lou out on the town. Lou and Felt are attracted to each other. But romance is interrupted by Millie Bird. Millie owns a dress shop and accuses Lou of wearing a stolen hat from her shop. Lou said it's from Chicago. Felt and Lou hit the town, stopping by The Savoy to watch vaudeville, Temple Gardens Dancehall to cut a rug, and Wakamaw to go rowing and see the fireworks. When their boat sinks, Felt swims Lou ashore and carries her to her hotel room. As things heat up, Felt leaves to investigate a sound in the hall. He dies falling down the stairs. Midge arrives. Lou finds a parrot feather in Felt's hand. Lou vows to get to bottom of everything.

Episode 4, *In Hot Water:* Lou suspects she's being set up. She retreats to the underground hot spring pool to soak. Then, Lou finds Midge's house-of-ill-repute on River St. Lou meets Phyllis, Midge's bouncer, a woman

who is 7' tall. Phyllis and Lou pool-shark for a while. Lou finds out that the city cops are being paid off to ignore robberies. The CPR and Sioux-liner workers fight over Lou's attention. Phyllis trips on her own high heels and dies. The cops arrest Lou for starting a riot. Lou is thrown in a jail cell. Zed, who turns out to be the chief of police, wants to charge her with three murders.

Episode 5, *Breakneck Speed:* Lou is charged with the murders of three undercover RCMP officers, the seven feet tall people. Lou reveals she's really undercover for the Saskatchewan Provincial Police. Midge really killed the three RCMP officers. Zed threatens to kill Lou. Lou escapes through tunnels. Midge drowns in the pool. Mr. Zed catches up to Lou at the train station. Lou is trying to get on Chicago train. The Silk Train blocks the way. It appears Zed was killed by the train. Lou awakes in the station with "Al", her boss at SPP. She did come in on the Chicago train, but boarded at Drinkwater (minutes east of Moose Jaw). Having nabbed a couple of crooks, Lou wants to head back to Saskatoon, "the cleanest city in the whole province, not to say the whole country."

---. "The Auction." Ambience. With Victor Young, Billy Morton, and Roberta Nicole. Music by Robert Bryanton. Producer Wayne Schmalz. ARCSK11790. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 12 April 1989. 50:00.

A musical and comedic auction of the stupidest things in Saskatchewan, recorded before a live audience. It is a satiric look at then-contemporary Saskatchewan history. Items up for auction include: Membership cards to the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan, three for a dollar; a political urinalysis kit to test for a person's political persuasion, blue for Tory, pink for Liberal, but unable to be positive about one colour for the NDP in Saskatchewan; Roy Romanow's fence-sitting saddle; shares in SaskBanana, the latest crown investment; and more.

---. "The Great Bridge Plan." Arts à la Carte. With Ken Kramer, Lorna Jackson, David Miller, Kim McCaw, and William Reiter. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05420T1 or R-5420. 10 May 1980. 30:00.

In a War-of-the-Worlds-like introduction, a DJ is bumped off the air by an emergency announcement: Saskatchewan is going to be buried under glaciers in an impending ice-age. Thus, the powers that be reveal a plan to relocate all of Saskatchewan's people, strip off Saskatchewan's topsoil and move it south, and then mine all the minerals under the province before the ice comes. Then, a great bridge will be built over the province, so that no one has to drive through Saskatchewan again. As Saskatchewan residents rebel against this plan, the United States government releases a mind-control gas over the province that makes people comply.

---. "Murder at Manitou." 5 episodes: *Danger in Danceland*; *Fishing for a Monster*; *The Secret of the Lake Monster*; *Fish Plant, Ten O'clock*; and *Fish Food*. With Paula Costain, Henry Woolf, Billy Morton, Patricia Drake, Kelly Handerck, Kent

Allen, Gabe Prendergast, Tom Rooney, and Pamela Haig. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK14256T1, ARCSK14256T2, ARCSK14256T3, ARCSK14259T1, ARCSK14259T2 or R-14256 to R-14259. Morningside, 20 November, 1995. each episode approximately 8:00.

Lou, under her real name Annie, is at a vacation at Manitou in 1927. There, she lands in a web of murder, diamond-smuggling, rogue carnivorous aquatic life, and an experimental British submarine disguised to look like the Loch Ness Monster.

Annie witnesses the murder of Mr. Handsome, who is later revealed to be an undercover RCMP officer. Handsome gave her a bag of bath salts containing diamonds. She meets Doctor Van Meister, who turns out to be an agent for a South African Diamond consortium; Vladimir, who turns out to be a Russian Diamond smuggler in league with Marinara – a murderous smuggler with a passion for deadly fish; and Cpl. Ken, who turns out to be an RCMP officer undercover as a dirty cop in league with Marinara. Also at Manitou are: Tom, of the British Navy who is testing a sub disguised as the Manitou Lake Monster (he ends up helping to rescue Lou from an underwater lair of bad guys); Marinara, a mad diamond smuggler who stabs people in the heart with her diamond hat pins (Handsome and Van Meister) and who feeds people to piranhas (Cpl Ken), as well as to sharks and barracudas. Marinara's plan is to make money, then flee while her pets take over lake Manitou and shut the resort down. Lou figures it all out, eventually, and Marinara escapes. So Lou, A.K.A. Annie, enjoys the rest of her vacation with Captain Tom.

---. "The Rum Runners of Rainbow Ravine." Episodes 8 and 9 of 10. Studio One: Stories Made for Radio. Ed. Wayne Schmalz. Regina, Coteau: 1990. 121-131.

---. "The Rum Runners of Rainbow Ravine." The Morning Edition. CBC National AM Network. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK 13230T1to ARCSK13230T10. Began broadcast: 22 Oct. 1990. 10 episodes of approximately 6:00.

An Olde Tyme serial set in Saskatchewan during the 1920s. The play capitalizes on romantic tales of rum runners in southern Saskatchewan's Big Muddy Valley. The series builds on the characters introduced in Ursell's previous serial "The Adventures of the Lady that's Known as Lou." This time, Lou's alias is Sal. Each episode was followed by a trivia question that listeners could call in to answer and win prizes.

Episode 1 : Sal's plane crashes in the Big Muddy Valley (later a trivia question). Sal awakes in the underground booze producing/running empire of Mr. X. Murleen, a genuine flapper queen, introduces Sal around to people like Shorty, the short piano player, while ensuring Sal that she will meet Mr. X and then be killed.

Episode 2: Sal meets Mr. X and is given a tour of his underground empire. Mr. X grows potatoes (with light from natural gas lamps) which he then ferments and distils them into illegal booze. Sal says she's here for

the "Big Boys in Yorkton" who are worried about X intruding on their business. She hopes to find out how Mr. X transports booze across the border.

Episode 3: Sal meets Luke, Mr. X's cattle rustler. She likes him. He's about to tell her something private when X and Murleen intervene.

Episode 4: Mr. X reveals that his booze is 500% over-proof potato hooch. The hooch is loaded into a zeppelin which is filled with helium, a natural gas bi-product, and painted to resemble a cloud, to avoid detection while flying into United States. The zeppelin launches from a cave-opening (in a cliff face) which is hidden by a canvas wall.

Episode 5: Luke pilots the zeppelin to the US (over Mt. Rushmore, then a work in progress, which becomes a trivia question) to deliver the booze. On the return trip, Mr. X pushes Luke out of the zeppelin. The episode ends with Sal crying and everyone wondering who will pilot the zeppelin home.

Episode 6: Sal has flown the Zeppelin home. She is later caught trying to use the radio in her grounded plane to contact help. She's caught by Mr. X and thrown in storage room with a sack of rattlers, but not until after Henry tries to tell her something using a potato code.

Episode 7: Shorty helps Sal out of room. He had de-fanged Murleen's snakes. Shorty and Sal seek escape in several ways: first with horses, but Shorty doesn't ride; then with the old rum-running cars, the Whiskey 6's. When, the bad guys catch up, Shorty opens a still as a diversion, but ends up drowning in hot whiskey. Shorty was actually an undercover R.C.M.P. officer.

Episode 8: Mr. X decrees that Sal will die, via a new bag of rattlers, but not until after curling practice on Mr. X's underground sheet of ice, cooled by piped Heluim. Mr. X, Murleen, and 2 bully-boys will play against Sal and the Bot-Fly Boys. Play continues into the 80th end. Mr. X reveals he's actually Mr. Z, the crooked Moose Jaw Police Chief of *The Adventure's of the Lady that's Known as Lou* fame. Sal reveals that she is Lou. The game continues.

Episode 9: Murleen, too cold, quits the game. Sal is again thrown into the storage room with the snakes which by now are hibernating in the cold. Henry offers a last meal of potatoes, either Roast, Crochets, Mashed, Puffs. It is code for R.C.M.P. Sal reveals she is Savoury, Pureed, Parsley Potatoes, or SPP for Saskatchewan Provincial Police. Sal and Henry must sneak through the saloon to Sal's now-fixed plane. After dodging bullets, they reach the plane. A fire starts in the underground empire as the episode ends.

Episode 10: Sal escapes in her plane as Mr. X's underground empire explodes. Henry has died. All seems over, but Sal sees a "cloud" flying in front of the full moon. Mr. X seems to have escaped with money from his bootlegging empire able to finance his bigger plans.

Ursell, Geoffrey and Barbara Sapergia. "The Giant Who Wept." Arts à la Carte. With

Dana Still, Ken Kramer, Kim MacCaw, Deborah Stott, Gabriel Prendergast. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK05334T1 or R-5334. 26 Jan. 1980. 25:00.

The Giant Who Wept is an intense, almost chaotic collage of the memories of Edouard Beaupré, A.K.A. The Willow Bunch Giant. This barrage of memories is combined with an intense, original soundscape. Beaupré's choice to leave the caring circle of family and friends and enter this world of exploitation was supposed to be for the good of his impoverished family back home. But little of his money makes it back to his relatives, and the side-show life eventually kills him. As he lies dying of pneumonia, Beaupré longs for a trip home, even if the trip happens after he dies. He longs for the more healthy and friendly prairie of his youth. Beaupré asks not to be dissected, but embalmed and displayed so his family can get the money, until:

> One day, when everyone is tired of looking [they can] take me home to my people and lay me down in the earth ... To become part of that beautiful prairie. The earth does not judge, does not measure those who fall into it. To come back to my people. To give myself into their keeping and rest. To be allowed to rest.

While Beaupré was alive, his unscrupulous agent stole most of Beaupré's earnings. After he dies, no money reaches his family.

Warren, Dianne. "End of Season." 5 episodes. With Sharon Bakker, Kate Gregg, James O'Shea, Gaye Burgess, Louise Handford, Carrie Schiffler, Kent Allen, Rick Gorrie, Jeff Rogstad, Ralph Blankenagel, Jake Roberts, Jeremy Schrader, Bill Hugli, and Billy Morton. Producer/Director Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK14176T2 through ARCSK14176T4 or R-14177 through R-14181. Recorded 20 Jan. 1992.

Joyce is an old woman who boards hockey players in her basement. Two of them, Mike and Bradley, are accused of raping a girl, Seanna, in the basement one night. Seanna is charged with mischief. In the hockey-mad town, there is little sympathy for the girl. The boy's charges are stayed and they are traded out of town. At Seanna's trial, Joyce testifies twice. The first time she is sympathetic to the boys, but in the round, she second, reveals a detail that ends up exonerating Seanna of mischief. There is no word on how that affects the boy's charges. What prompted Joyce to come forward with more detail is a story of Maureen. Maureen is a hockey fan who starts out cheering for the boys, but, upon hearing the story of Seanna's rape, recalls her own teenage rape which she has kept hidden for years. Joyce decides she probably isn't going to be the hockey fan she once was.

---. "Happy Birthday Arnie." Ambience. With Bill Hugli, Louise Hanford, Beth Lischeron, and Robert Seale. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK09508T1. 31 Aug. 1985. 20:00.

It is Arnie's 72nd birthday and a small dinner party is starting. The guests include Arnie, his wife Louise, his brother Bill, and his sister-in-law Ada. Arnie claims he has suffered a heart attack while in the garden and will spend dinner in the bedroom. Ada is the only one who seems concerned. Arnie's "closer" relations, his wife and brother, seem not at all worried. Ada spends her meal trying to remind Bill and Lorraine of Arnie's past good deeds. While Arnie is lying alone, he calls for a priest. Lorraine dismisses the request, citing that Arnie is not Catholic. Arnie's call for a television to try to find an evangelist to watch is also quashed. Finally, it is his bedside clock radio that provides him what spiritual aid he can find. He sings along to a gospel show. Eventually, Arnie stops singing. His family brings in his birthday cake only to find Arnie has died.

---. "An Innocent Fantasy." Ambience. With Lou Weatherall, Kelly Handereck, Gaye Burgess, Kerry Sandomirsky, Louis Handsford, and Rob Roy. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK13593T1 or R-13593. 9 April, [need year]. 20:00.

A radio call-in show welcomes guest Chester B. Field, author of *Modern Myths for Modern Living*. Chester's book is a collection of modern fables, which he hopes to use in order to help callers decide their own most moral way out of a problematic situation. Chester stresses that morality is relative and that he doesn't want to dictate right and wrong. Marie Anne calls the show wanting to know whether or not it is okay to cheat on her boyfriend with a hunkier guy. Chester tries to tell a story to help her decide, but Marie Anne wants a yes or no answer. The listener switches between the call-in show and dramatizations of the story, told by Chester. Chester tells the story of a woman who wins a date with a handsome TV host, and is tempted to cheat on her boyfriend. Marie Anne takes the story as permission to cheat and hangs up. Chester is outraged. He continues the story of the contest-date and ends it with a riverboat's sinking and drownings all around. Thus Chester *does* try to dictate right and wrong and shows his subjectivity.

---. "Love Me Six Times." Ambience. Producer Kelley Jo Burke. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. 9 Feb. 1999. 36:00.

Eadie recalls her six marriages to the same man, Austin. Each marriage is compared to rounds in a boxing match. Eadie is traveling to Banff with Ellen, her ex-daughter-in-law. There, she will meet her son, Phillip (Ellen's ex-husband). Eadie hopes that by forcing the divorced couple to spend time together the two may rekindle their relationship. As Eadie travels with Ellen, Eadie confesses that she has killed Austin. Austin's death is compared to a boxer being counted out. Eadie hopes the time she will have to spend in Banff talking to police will be enough time for Ellen and Phillip to reconcile.

---. "Melancholia." Ambience. With Merril Barrecca, Chip Chuipka, Stephen

Arsenych, and Billy Norton. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK11654T1. 11 Dec. 1988. 20:00.

Ed and Emma are in two different bars telling the story of their relationship. Ed is at a piano bar. He tells his side of the story to a piano player who is looking for a band (he has a sign on the window of the bar). Emma is talking to a bartender in a bar with a (stand-up) bass player. The bartender wants him to find a new gig. Since his piano player died, he has played only sad tunes. Ed and Emma reveal their story to their listeners. They meet on a bridge, where Emma is thinking of jumping. Ed convinces her to come with him to re-think things. He takes her to his peach-coloured apartment. She loves peach. They fall in love and drink peach daiquiris until peaches go out of season. When the relationship wanes, Ed paints his walls black. Emma asks to be taken back to the bridge. Ed takes her there. When the two lovers go to their respective bars, Emma recalled seeing a "musicians wanted" sign in the window of the piano bar. She takes the bass player to the piano bar and waits outside until she hears him playing happier music with the pianist. She doesn't go into the bar. Emma and Ed don't get back together.

---. "Prisoners of the Light." Ambience. With Kent Allen, Lou Weatherall, Ken Kramer, and Kate Gregg. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK012559T1. 14 Apr. 1990. 30:00.

A small town preacher claims that, as a boy, he saw a vision of Jesus in the sky. His church is hit by a tornado and the only apparent damage is a small hole in the roof. He calls it a miracle and raises money to build a skylight to "let in the light of heaven." Meanwhile, the caretaker, Tom Cassidy, has gone missing. Tom's wife and the police are searching for him. The preacher, to maintain his miraculous saving of the church story, claims that the caretaker must have gone back on the bottle and left town. A terrible smell drives the workmen installing the skylight out of the church. The smell draws the attention of the police, who discover the body of Tom in the church basement. He died when the tornado caused a foundation wall to collapse in the church basement.

Wesseler, Marlis. "Class 1-A." Ambience. With Chip Chuipka. Producer Wayne Schmalz. CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK11652T1 or R-1165226. Nov. 1988.

The thoughts and musings of a farmer-turned truck driver. He ranges from the woes of a man forced off his farm, to narrow-minded jokes and rants about men, women, feminists, the scarcity of work, homosexuals, AIDS, Ukrainians, abortion, organ transplantation, and his mother in law's theory that, "It's all a Jewish Conspiracy to take over the CBC." In the end, all the listener is left with is his question, "What kinda world would it be without me in it anyway?"

---. "Life Skills." Ambience. Featuring Marlane O'Brian. Producer Wayne Schmalz.

CBC Saskatchewan, Regina. ARCSK11996T1 or R-11996. 11 Mar. 1990.
Kathleen reflects about family, life, and marriage as she drives to Saskatoon to meet her husband at a party for the "Life Skills" course he is taking. She flashes back to memories of a family reunion (at the Crystal Creek Hall) and fights with her husband (at their home). In the end, she decides she's basically happy with her life.

Young, Adam. "Defining Me." Gallery. Produced by Kelley Jo Burke. Recorded at CBC Saskatchewan, mixed 17 June 2002. 10:00.
Note: Youth drama winner, 2002.
Plot: Two young boys go for a joy ride that leaves one of them dead. Flash forward years to a young doctor speaking to a group of high school students about how he killed a friend during a joyride in a stolen car, how he tried to kill himself, but was inspired to become a doctor because he "owed this world two lives."

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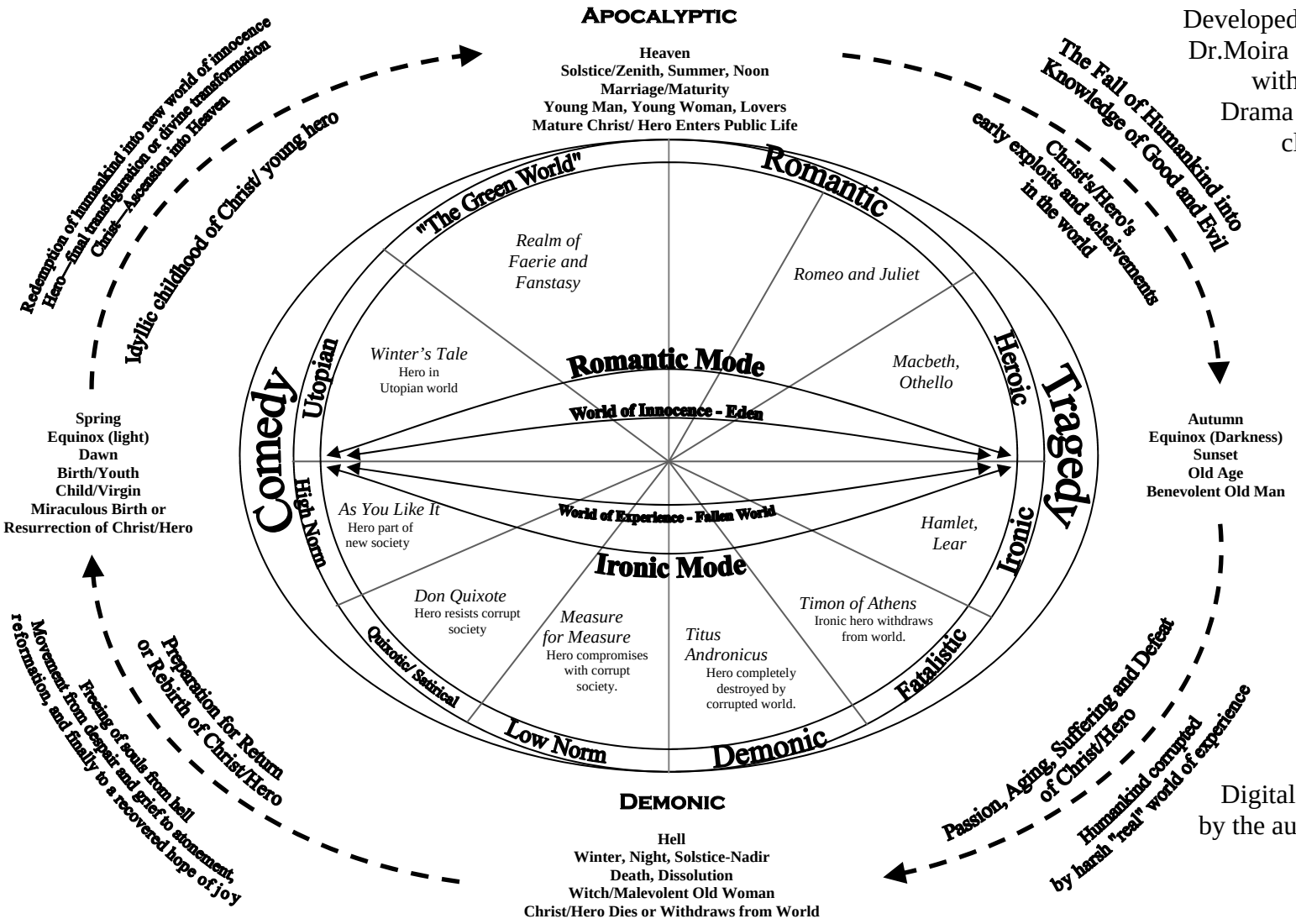
APPENDIX A: Northrop Frye's Theory of Drama Chart



Developed by:
Dr.Moira Day
with her
Drama 401
class.

Digitalized
by the author

APPENDIX B: LITERATURE SURVEY

Though most recent authors writing about radio drama bemoan the lack of more literature on the subject, the available literature is helpful. Tim Crook's Radio Drama: Theory and Practice (1999) provides a very detailed overview of the history of sound transmission, the history of radio drama, as well as theories of writing, directing, and producing radio drama. The BBC's tradition of radio drama up to 1980 is thoroughly explored in John Drakakis' collection of essays British Radio Drama. Peter Lewis's Radio Drama is a collection of essays providing insight into traditions of radio drama in Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Of special interest to this project were the following chapters: *The Sponsor's vs. the Nation's Choice: North American Radio Drama* by Howard Fink and *Radio Drama: the Australian Experience* by Rodney Pybus. Thomas Allen Greenfield's Radio: a Reference Guide provides a very informative introduction outlining the development of radio in the United States. The reference guide itself provides a bibliographical survey of 500 works relating to radio.

As for the story of Canadian radio and radio drama, there are many anecdotal works that tell the story from very personal perspectives. Of particular Canadian interest are the following: Bronwyn Drainie's biography of her father, Living the Part: John Drainie and the Dilemma of Canadian Stardom; Alice Frick, a former CBC Drama Department senior script editor, tells the tale of the Golden Age of CBC radio drama as she lived it in her book, Image in the Mind : CBC Radio Drama, 1944-1954; Bill McNeil and Morris Wolfe's Signing On: The Birth of Canadian Radio is a gold-mine of stories as told by Canadian radio broadcasting pioneers; and a gossipy and star-studded glimpse into CBC radio and CBC television is found in Knowlton Nash's Cue the Elephant! Backstage Tales at the CBC. Canada's gifts to the world of radio are explored in Gil Murray's Nothing on But the Radio: a Look Back at Radio in Canada and How it Changed the World and the entertaining The Sound and the Fury: An Anecdotal History of Canadian Broadcasting by Warner Troyer. Readers interested in a more detailed discussion of British, American, Canadian, and Australian radio traditions should refer to the above mentioned works by Lewis, Drakakis and Crook.

Other Theses

I have found myself quite virtually alone in studying Saskatchewan radio drama, especially in the contemporary period. Widen the parameters to include radio drama in the rest of Western Canada, and there are still few theses to be found. The last thesis from the University of Saskatchewan which focused on radio drama was Willis Barry Pearson's Master's Thesis, entitled: A Bibliographical Study of Canadian Radio and Television Drama Produced on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's National Network, 1944-1967 (Saskatchewan 1968). Pearson's thesis is strictly a "catalogue of Canadian radio and television drama that would lay the groundwork for studies" in the medium of broadcast drama (v). Pearson's thesis dealt with national CBC radio and television. Steven Olson's The Function of Radio Drama: An Alberta Perspective (MA Alberta 1991) focuses on radio drama in Alberta from 1929 through to the 1950s. Olson focuses primarily on the radio dramas produced outside of the CBC, the economics of radio drama produced for commercial radio stations, and the works of Elsie Park Gowan. Roger Des Ormeaux's The Sounding Board: W.O. Mitchell's fiction on CBC Radio (MA Concordia 1994) explores the literary processes of W. O. Mitchell[77] as he turned his written fiction into radio-works. Graça Maria De Sousa's Western CBC Radio Dramas of the 1960s and 1970s: Regionalism, Postcoloniality, and the Western Canadian Myth of Beginnings (MA Concordia 1996) explores some western playwrights working from a postcolonial view in the 1960s and 1970s whose work looks back to the years of western settlement and the Depression. She focuses on a relatively small number of plays produced at CBC Calgary. De Sousa's stated reason for focusing exclusively on Calgary-produced plays was that playwrights from across the prairies sent scripts there; thus it is a fair sample of Western Canadian Dramas.

I hope to provide a study of, to borrow a phrase from Mansel Robinson's *Ghost Trains*, the dramatic "dark territory" that is Saskatchewan radio drama. With the exception of Olson's thesis on Alberta radio drama, most study of radio drama based on regions of Canada has been no more specific than Western Canada. Literature has been largely uninterested in any radio plays produced within the last 25 years. Wayne Schmalz's On Air: Radio in Saskatchewan does pay some specific literary attention to

[77] Mitchell, of course, did some of his growing up in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan radio drama. The scope of the book is wide. Schmalz tracks the growth of radio in Canada as it played out in Saskatchewan: the political, financial, and personal stories of the medium of radio. Also of note is Schmalz's Studio One: Stories Made for Radio - an anthology of plays produced by Schmalz in his first ten years as a producer at CBC Saskatchewan. It does include a brief appendix of reflections by the playwrights on the selected plays. But radio drama created in Saskatchewan has remained a mostly unutilized source of material for study.

APPENDIX C: VOICES DEBATE

A discussion of the voice of radio plays is important to this thesis. A number of plays were inspired as a direct result of the perceived lack of native voices in the mainstream arts scene in Saskatchewan in 1985. In radio drama terms, the question of the aboriginal voice in CBC Radio Drama seems to have reached a critical mass of sorts in 1985 with *The Riel Commission: An Inquiry into the Survival of a People*. This work is more a feature than a radio play, incorporating dramatic scenes with recorded stories, memories, and events. Recorded in March, 1985, the project was an epic (five one-hour episodes) exploration of the Métis in Canada in 1985 – with attention to the history of Louis Riel and the Métis uprising in 1885 at Batoche. Schmalz described what he hoped to accomplish with the project during an interview on the CBC program Arts Week: "it was important for me to do a program that would allow us to hear Métis on all variety of subjects" and to that end "we've used dramatizations from journal entries, from diaries, from letters people have written. We've mixed that with views of various people" (ARCSK09699). Schmalz was more explicit regarding his doubts about final shape of the whole project in his book On Air, Radio in Saskatchewan. While Schmalz did acknowledge that the project received wide-ranging praise -- even an award from Columbia University and the National Broadcasters Association in Washington -- he admitted:

> I was less than euphoric at what it had accomplished. For it wasn't until I was halfway through the production, after I had firmly committed myself to this concept and couldn't turn back, that I realized I had made a basic mistake. By routing natives' opinions through the character of a white, middle-class commissioner, I may have been reflecting the way things have been done in the past and how things are done today, but at the same time I was also perpetuating a way of thinking that was surely out of place in Canada in the 1980s (Schmalz, 153).

Schmalz also admitted that there were people who refused to be a part of the project to avoid contributing to the inherent cultural appropriation of such a work (On Air, 154). The tensions over Native stories and who has the right to tell them was at the centre of a round table discussion that took place later that year, on CBC Saskatchewan's Arts

Week.[78] The program host Lori Regher was leading a round table discussion about visions of Riel in the arts in 1985. Maria Campbell, then the Artist in Residence at the Prince Albert Public Library, argued that there was no vision of Riel, because no major projects from Native artists received Heritage year funding. Campbell noted that the only grant money most native artists received was for working in small ways on larger projects by non-native artists. Campbell also tried to clarify her position on who has the right to produce art dealing with what she called "native stories." Campbell said:

> I'm not saying that I don't believe that non-native writers or non-native producers should leave our stuff alone. I've had writers that have come to me and said, 'Maria, you have no right to tell us what to write about.' All I'm saying is that if you're going to write it, make sure it's understood that it's from your point of view and use somebody else as your main character – somebody you understand and whom you can speak through.

Recent examples of the Native voice speaking, and singing, in Saskatchewan radio dramas can be found in plays such as *The Velvet Devil* by Andrea Menard and *My Indian Brother* by Mirelda Fiddler.[79]

[78] *Arts Week*, hour two, CBC Saskatchewan, November 24, 1985.
[79] For more on *Velvet Devil*, see *Annotated Bibiography* and *Bodyscape*. For more on *My Indian Brother*, see the *Annotated Bibiography*.

APPENDIX D: CANADIAN RADIO BACKGROUND

Canadian Radio - Beginnings to 1945

Canada has always been at the forefront of radio development. Perhaps Canada's enthusiasm for the medium of radio was born out of Canada's youth as a nation, its immense size, and scattered centers of population. Radio was embraced as a means of spreading information quickly over the vast expanses of the country. From 1910 and into the 1920s, North America saw radio transmitters springing up like high-tech weeds. Hobbyists, newspapers, stores, shipping companies, and others all wanted to get in on the commercial possibilities of the medium of sound transmission (Greenfield 2). Saskatchewan radio hobbyists also began broadcasting during this time. Wayne Schmalz, in his book On Air: Radio in Saskatchewan, provides a thorough history of the birth and growth of the radio industry in Saskatchewan. Schmalz notes that among the earliest developments in Saskatchewan radio broadcasting was the establishment of the province's first registered amateur radio club: Saskatoon's in 1912. The province's first commercial radio station, CKCK in Regina, began broadcasting ten years later, on July 22, 1922. When CKCK hit the air, it was in the company of 61 amateur broadcasting stations across the province (On Air, 6-7).

In the face of the ever-growing number of transmitters in Canada and the United States, both countries' governments were forced to initiate some form of regulation. It is here that Canada and the United States take very different paths in national radio development.[80] Canada, acting upon the recommendations of the Aird Commission[81] (1928), established a system of public ownership, like the United Kingdom's British

[80] For a more complete view on the growth of the American and Canadian radio industry, seek out Howard Fink's *The Sponsor's v. the Nation's Choice: North American Radio Drama* in Peter Lewis' Radio Drama (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1981).

[81] Prime Minister King was spurred to action on radio regulation by several factors. The two most commonly cited are: 1. the inspiring demonstration of the power of radio to reach Canadians from coast to coast when, in 1927, the Canadian National Railway radio division broadcast Canada's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations live over 23 private stations linked especially for the occasion (Schmalz On Air 45); and 2. the growing number of complaints and controversies surrounding some religious broadcasts. As Troyer notes, "In Saskatchewan, for example, a Bible station had gone commercial and rented time to the Ku Klux Klan!" (Sound and Fury, 43-44). The situation to which Troyer alludes is a fascinating and complex combination of religion, politics, and commerce. Wayne Schmalz gives it thorough treatment in his chapter "Unholy Wars" in On Air: Radio in Saskatchewan.

Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (the CRBC) was created in 1932. In the United States, however, the National Radio Commission, or NRC[82], was created in 1927 to bring order to the robust, private American broadcasting industry.

In Canada, the newly-formed CRBC was in charge of both broadcasting *and* regulation (Schmalz, 49)[83]. This situation would last for four years, until 1936, when out of the CRBC would be created the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the CBC. Regulation was removed from the mandate of the CBC, ending what many saw as a conflict of interest inherent in the CRBC, it being regulator over and competitor with private radio stations[84] (Fink 228).

Canadian Radio Drama, Beginnings to 1945

The earliest developments in Canadian radio drama date back to the mid-1920s. For most of the 1920s, there was a lot of cross-over programming from the US into Canada. Powerful transmitters beamed US programs north and US programs were carried over Canadian Stations (Fink 230). By 1925, performers in both Moncton, NB and Vancouver, BC were reading plays on the radio. By 1928, there were plays by Canadian authors appearing on the radio (Drainie 9; Fink 233).

In 1931, the CNR radio department produced The Romance of Canada series. Tyrone Guthrie credits The Romance of Canada as being "certainly the first dramatic effort of any scale on the Canadian air" (Signing On, 192). It was the first nationally broadcast series of plays that dealt with Canadian history. The writer was Merrill Denison[85], "a young Canadian with radio experience" (Fink 233). Tyrone Guthrie was imported from Britain to produce and direct the 20 plays. Guthrie was sought because of his experience as a director in London and a producer of radio plays for the BBC (Fink

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[82] The NRC became the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 1934.

[83] The political and financial growing pains of the public and private broadcasting systems are well documented from a Saskatchewan point of view in Wayne Schmalz's On Air.

[84] Fink also writes about the infamously political *Mr. Sage* broadcasts that, some contend, led to the break-up of the CRBC.

[85] Encyclopaedia of Canadian Theatre Denison, Merrill - "Playwright of realistic dramas and satire born in Detroit, Michigan, 1893, died in San Diego, California, 1975. Considered to be one of Canada's first important 20th century playwrights" (<http://www.canadiantheatre.com/dict.pl?term=Merrill%20Denison>).

233). The series was a huge production and laid the groundwork of actors, technicians, and facilities that would later become the CRBC and CBC Drama Departments (Signing On 192).

These drama departments (of the CRBC and later the CBC) would have been a powerful tool in fulfilling the Aird report's vision of radio being "a great force in fostering a national spirit and interpreting national citizenship" (Troyer 37). When, in 1932, the CRBC brought public, nationalized radio to Canada, *regional* dramatic series began to develop across the country: in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, and even Kamloops (Fink 234). With the public broadcasting re-organization of 1936, the CBC took over Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission's broadcasting duties, which included "The Drama Department of the CRBC [which] carried over to the CBC and was the most important program department" (Fink 228).

The reach of the new national network was immense, covering 90% of the country. Onto this national network another boom of national and regional dramatic series were soon broadcast. From 1936 to 1939, "almost fifty new series had their inception" (Fink, 235). These early series would lay the foundation for later, much-renowned series like *CBC Stage* and *CBC Wednesday Night* that were to become the flower of the CBC Drama Department's Golden Age (Fink 229).

Fink also touches briefly on the tradition of French language radio drama. There was a significant and unique tradition of French radio drama that grew in Quebec. Due to the language barrier, imported American programs didn't have the impact in Quebec that they had in English-speaking Canada. While much French-language radio drama in Quebec came from the Radio-Canada French network of the CBC, established by 1938, there were also a great number of private stations offering high quality serious-dramatic series (Fink 232).

Saskatchewan saw its own birth of a titanic force in radio broadcasting in July of 1939 when CBK Watrous began broadcasting on 540 kHz[86] at 50,000 watts. Because of its combination of power and the flatness of the surrounding prairie, CBK was hailed as one of the most powerful stations on the continent, if not the world, in terms of the area it could reach (Schmalz 67). The Saskatchewan Archives Sound Collection does have a

[86] a frequency that Wayne Schmalz says was "confiscated from CJRM" (On Air 67).

recording of the inaugural broadcast of the CBK tower. After the strains of *Oh, Canada* had issued forth, the listener was treated to speeches of various dignitaries from the world of broadcasting and politics.

During the thirties and forties, there were private radio stations within Saskatchewan doing their part to add to Canadian radio drama. Wayne Schmalz, in On Air, cites the example of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan's local radio station CKBI. It celebrated upgrading from amateur to commercial status with the help of local performers: "For the official opening of CKBI in January 1934, the Prince Albert Historical Society presented a radio drama, replete with music and sound effects, on the founding of the city" (On Air 61). CKCK Regina contributed, too, as Art Crichton, who worked at CKCK in 1942, recalls in Signing On: "We couldn't put on CBC 'stage', but we did some dramas. Small ones, mind you, using the staff as announcers, actors, and sound effects technicians. We had a photographer who traveled around the world. He had all kinds of stories to tell and several of us dramatized these things" (McNeil and Wolfe 132). Bird Films of Regina sponsored the program, called *Bird's Camera Store*, which ran for fifteen-minutes every Sunday afternoon on CKCK[87] (Schmalz 79).

The cultural importance of radio drama was becoming increasingly apparent to prairie theatre audiences as live, professional theatre was declining through the 1920s and 1930s. In The History of Prairie Theatre: The Development of Theatre in Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan 1833-1982, E. Ross Stuart[88] cites a number of factors as contributing to this decline: the Depression made the economics of touring unfeasible for professional shows from outside the prairies, which constituted most of the prairie's professional theatre; also, the rise of popularity of the movies played a part – movie

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[87] Dick Bird: b. August 16, 1892, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, England; d. September 27, 1986. "In 1937 he began a weekly program on CKCK Radio called *Camera Trails*. He also published The Camera Trailer, which was illustrated, with his own photographs, for distribution to his radio audience." Honours: "He was an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society and a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London. In 1950 he was the second Canadian, after Yousuf Karsh, to become a fellow of the Photographic Society of America. In that year he was also made the first life Member of the Saskatchewan Natural History Society. In 1976 Bird received an honourary Doctorate of Law from the University of Regina. He was honoured as Saskatchewan's Pioneer Cinematographer at the International Film Festival in Yorkton in 1979."
Dick and Ada Bird fonds. Saskatchewan Archival Information Network
<http://scaa.usask.ca:10094/WebZ/Authorize?sessionid=0>

[88] Ross's book is an excellent source for more information on local theatrical traditions, history and companies across the prairies, whether amateur or professional, small town or big city.

distributors bought more and more theatre outlets exclusively for movies, leaving few performance spaces (Stuart, 77). Stuart writes that none of these factors were unique to the prairies, but radio may have had a stronger adverse effect on professional live theatre on the prairies than it did elsewhere:

> In Western Canada in particular, radio replaced theatre in many people's lives. Radio provided convenient, economical information, entertainment, and culture; in effect, it became Canada's National Theatre for many years. Radio conquered the difficulties of distance and weather, bringing entertainment to everyone. It also did not have to worry about bringing widely dispersed audiences together in one place – it was available whenever a listener wanted it. Undoubtedly, the success of radio hastened the decline of professional theatre in the 1930s (Stuart 77).

Other live performances did continue, but not to the extent of the great touring companies that reigned during the early 1900s. For more information on these institutions like the Chautauqua, amateur theatre companies like the Saskatoon and Regina Little Theatres[89], the extension divisions of the Universities of Regina and Saskatoon, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, drama pioneers like Mary Ellen Burgess, and festivals like the Dominion Drama Festival[90], Stuart's History of Prairie Theatre provides a detailed account.

By the 1940s, radio was the dominant media in most towns and cities in Saskatchewan. Art Crichton, of CKCK Regina in the forties, recalled in Signing On: "Radio was the cultural centre of the whole community. The only other cultural outlet was the movies and no one could afford to go to the movies every night" (McNeil and Wolfe 132). The economics of distance, audience, and convenience swung the pendulum of popular entertainment toward radio.

WWII offered radio another chance to illustrate its power to convey information, almost immediately, across the world. Audiences in Canada heard world events broadcast into their homes as they happened. At home and abroad, the war years saw radio drama drafted as a tool to bolster the war effort (Schmaltz 77).

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[89] Some of Saskatchewan's Little Theatres: Saskatoon: Christ Church Dramatic Society, 1921-1929; Saskatoon Little Theatre, 1922-1949; and the Regina Little Theatre, established 1931 (Londré and Watermeiser 352).

[90] The DDF ran from 1932 to 1970, then became Theatre Canada until 1978. Robertson Davies described the DDF as such, "The foundation of our modern professional theatre rests on many stones, but the largest and strongest is the achievement of the Dominion Drama Festival" (from his introduction to *Love and Whiskey: the Story of the Dominion Drama Festival* by Betty Lee: quoted by Londré and Watermeiser 356-7).

Golden Ages and Endings

For most radio drama traditions, the arrival of television signals the end of radio's dominance as the dramatic medium of choice. The abruptness of this shift from radio to television depends upon the conditions of television's introduction. In Canada, television was not widely accessible until 1952. Even then, it was introduced by the CBC who wanted to create as little disturbance for their radio networks as possible. In 1956, the Canadian Royal Commission on Broadcasting's report made provisions to protect radio broadcasting, while allowing for the expansion of television. Canada's television capabilities developed faster than in Australia, but slower than in the US.[91]

The radio-versus-television struggle was also playing out in the USA, Britain and Australia. The United States, unlike the Canadian experience, saw television take over from radio almost immediately after the end of World War Two. The end of the war freed resources to mass-produce and mass-market television. The USA's commercial system saw sponsorship money, and very soon thereafter audiences, switch from the radio to the now more commercially-available television.[92] The Canadian experience of radio drama after WWII is similar to the British example, which saw radio drama persevere much longer after WWII than it did in the United States. This was due to a combination of heavy-hitting playwrights[93] like Beckett and Pinter focusing on radio drama and the BBC controlling the introduction of television while continuing to foster its radio programming (Drakakis 15-16). In Australia, the commercial radio stations kept churning out "mass production of mass-appeal series, series, and single plays, mostly of mind-numbing banality" (Pybus 254). This was due largely to the fact that television wasn't widely available in Australia until after 1956 (Pybus 254).

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[91] For a thorough statistical analysis of how the spread of television impacted the radio listening habits throughout the world - George A. Codding Junior's Broadcasting Without Barriers. It is a numerical snapshot of how radio was faring as television spread throughout Canada, the United States, and other countries around the world in 1959.

[92] The only real outlet for radio drama which remains in the USA the Public Broadcasting System. But there are people working to change this, see Joanne Kaufman's article *Stay Tuned for Radio Drama Renaissance* in the June 19, 1998 edition of The Wall Street Journal (Eastern edition).

[93] David Wade's, in his chapter in Drakakas's British Radio Drama, *British Radio Drama Since 1960*, addresses how the British stage benefited from playwrights who honed their craft writing radio plays for the BBC. Wade quotes John Scotney, Head of BBC's television script unit, recalling, "I was talking to one of my ex-bosses and said, 'By the way, can you think of the names of important modern playwrights who have started on radio?' He just said, 'Yes all of them'" (Wade, 220).

So, CBC radio continued to provide a "national theatre of the air" to Canadians into the 1960s. This time became known as the Golden Age of Canadian radio drama. The number of original works by Canadian playwrights broadcast during this golden age (1939 to the mid-1950s) reached about 3500 (Londré and Watermeiser 352). Four producers reigned on the CBC for this golden age of Canadian Drama: Andrew Allan (now National Drama Supervisor), Esse W. Ljungh, J. Frank Willis, and Rupert Caplan. They were supplied a steady stream of scripts from Alice Frick, the National Script Editor – in charge of play selection and liaising between the CBC Drama Department and Canadian writers. Nolton Nash credits Andrew Allan as being "the man who gave Canada its first national theatre" ("Cue the Elephant!" 13). Allen's inspiration for the above-mentioned goal of providing a "national theatre of the air" seems to be the 1929 BBC handbook[94] (Drakakis 7).

Allan saw radio as essential to Canada, saying: "Broadcasting is one of Canada's principal means of survival and only in radio could we have enough drama to make a theatre in Canada" (Nash, 13). Former CBC president Al Johnson recalls the personal impact of Allan's productions, saying "It was our Canadian Theatre. Without it, for me, Canada would only have been Saskatchewan" (Nash, 13). Nash also quotes another Saskatchewanian, Frances Hyland, who was inspired by Allan's shows when she was becoming an actress in the prairies: "We didn't have a whole lot in Regina. Listening to CBC Radio drama was my theatre. The CBC was literally holding the country together, with a couple million people all listening to the same program … They were telling Canadian stories to me" ("Cue the Elephant!" 13).

Through the Golden Age of Canadian radio drama, there was a one-woman playwriting industry by the name of Mary Pattison working in Saskatoon. Among the programs recorded in the archives is an interview with Mary Pattison on CBC Saskatchewan's *The Noon Edition* in November 1986[95]. During the interview, she looks back at her writing career on the fortieth anniversary of the debut of her long-running serial *The Jacksons and Their Neighbours*, which ran on the CBC Prairie region Farm

[94] Drakakis quotes the 1929 BBC handbook which, "set out the case for radio as a national theatre, with its 'means of spanning the unprofitable dramatic ground which lies between the commercial and the artistic; between the business theatre of today and the national theatre of tomorrow'" (7).

Broadcasts for 18 years, from 1946 through 1964. Pattison began writing the series when she lived near Winnipeg. She and her husband later moved to Saskatoon, where she continued to write for the series (still produced in Winnipeg). The Jacksons were the Prairie regional farm family on the noon farm broadcasts. The dual purpose of *The Jacksons* was to offer serialized dramatizations which provided farming information and to reflect experiences of farming families in several regions of Canada. Pattison noted that the serials were eventually dropped from the farm broadcasts because of the shortening of the time allowed for the farm broadcasts and the expense of producing the serial drama itself. The show demanded 10 minutes of script, five days a week, for 18 years (Pattison, interview). This alone would make her one of the most prolific writers ever to grace the prairie. But Pattison also wrote plays for the CBC's regional and national networks. For example, her sci-fi inspired *Destination Earth*, which played as part of Prairie Playhouse on the CBC Eastern Network in 1952, and her 1955 play *Gold is Where You Find It*, which aired on the Trans-Canada Network's Summerfallow.

Eventually, Canadian radio drama's Golden Age ended and television finally took over as the dominant medium for drama. Radio drama on the CBC has continued, but has lost the prominence it held before television. Loss of budgets, talent and audiences to television and a resurgence of live theatre in most regions of the country added up to less attention being paid to radio drama in general.[96]

[96] Saskatchewan radio did continue to hear dramatic exchanges over the airwaves. The combination of telephone lines and radio transmitters combined in the 1950s to create the "the open line show – which reportedly premiered in Canada at CKOM ('The Hart Line')"; thus "The void caused by formal drama moving from radio to television was being partially filled by programs which had all of the elements of drama but which didn't go by that name" (Schmalz 100).

APPENDIX E: TIMELINE: SASKATCHEWAN AND RADIO HISTORY

1816 ***SK*** - Piapot born on the southern prairies (died in 1908 at the Piapot Reserve in Saskatchewan).

1870 ***SK*** - Rupert's Land turned over to the Government of Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company.

1872 ***SK*** - Dominion Lands Act passed – preparations made for settlers. Métis on the Saskatchewan River feared losing their land.

1874 ***SK*** - North-West Mounted Police arrive in the region.
- Treaty No.4

1878 ***SK*** - September 23, Finland, Tomi Jannus Alankola, is born. He would become known in Saskatchewan as Tom Sukanen.

1879 ***SK*** - Violet McNaughton born (d. 1968)

1881 ***SK*** - population boom in Saskatchewan region begins – grows from 19,000 to almost 500,000 over the next 30 years.
- Edouard Beaupré (1881-1904) born near Willow Bunch.

1882-3 ***SK*** - CPR built the line through Regina and Moose Jaw. Settlement in the Palliser Triangle increases.

1883 ***SK*** - Regina becomes capital of the North West Territories.
- Illness and starvation on Piapot's Indian Head reservation lead to his negotiating move to the Qu'Appelle Valley.

1885 ***SK*** - North-West Rebellion. Riel tried and hanged in Regina in the fall of 1885.

1887 Winnipeg Grain Exchange formed.

1888 ***SK*** – Territorial Legislative Assembly in Regina.

1896-7 ***SK*** - Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier's government launches a national and international immigration campaign to attract more settlers.

1897 ***SK*** - North West Territories gained responsible government.

1899 ***SK*** - Piapot deposed as chief for allowing a Sun Dance and giving ceremony.

1900 ***SK*** - Period of Saskatchewan's heaviest immigration begins. Between 1900 and 1920 the population rises from less than 100,000 to almost 700,000.

1900 ***radio:***
- December 23 - Canadian-born Reginald Fessenden makes first broadcast of the human voice via radio waves.

1901 ***SK*** **-** *Territorial Grain Association* formed – would become the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association in 1905. In 1926, it was taken over by the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section.

1903 ***SK*** - Moose Jaw and Regina incorporated
- The Barr Colonists, 2000 English settlers, arrive to settle near Lloydminster.

1904 ***SK*** - 1904 - Prince Albert incorporated
- Douglas, Thomas Clement born at Falkirk, Scotland 20 October, 1904 (d. 1986).
- Beaupré dies of pneumonia while performing at the World's Fair in St. Louis.

1905 ***SK*** – September 1st - Saskatchewan Act creates the province of Saskatchewan.
- Premier Walter Scott, Liberal, 1905-1916

1906 ***SK*** - Saskatoon incorporated
- Women's suffrage debate starring Mrs. McNaughton reported on in Saskatoon.

1910 to the mid-1920s
Radio:
(USA) - individual and corporate transmitters bloom everywhere - people, newspapers, stores all get in on the action (Greenfield 2).
- The Radio Corporation of America, RCA, was created by the rulers of wireless, Westinghouse, General Electric, AT&T, and Columbia Fruit, to market receivers to American market (Greenfield 2).

1911 ***SK*** - Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company (SCECo)
- *Homemakers' Clubs of Saskatchewan* hold the First Convention of Saskatchewan Women in Regina.
- Tom Sukanen homesteads in the Macrorie-Birsay region.

1912 ***Radio***
SK – Saskatchewan's first registered amateur radio club – Saskatoon.

1913 ***SK*** **-** North Battleford and Weyburn incorporated.

1914 ***SK*** - Swift Current incorporated.

1916 ***SK*** **-** Premier William Martin, Liberal, 1916-1922
- Women's suffrage granted in Saskatchewan.

1917 ***SK*** - United Grain Growers Ltd. born of marriage between the Grain Growers' Grain Company and the Alberta Farmer's Co-operative Elevator Company.

- Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries Ltd. and Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance both formed this year.

SK - Fort San, near Fort Qu'appelle built by the Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League.

1918 ***SK*** – Spanish Flu Epidemic hits Saskatchewan.

1920 ***Radio:***
(USA) *Sam 'n' Henry* first airs in Chicago. It would be re-named *Amos 'n' Andy* in 1928 – went national on NBC (Greenfield 4).

1921 - Farmers' Union of Canada established.

Radio:
(USA) 10KYW Chicago launches, broadcasting operas exclusively.

1922 ***SK*** - Premier Charles A. Dunning, Liberal, 1922-1926
- Saskatoon Little Theatre established (1922-1949)

Radio:
(SK) – 22 July, Saskatchewan's first commercial radio station, CKCK Regina, begins broadcasting.
(USA) 3 August - *The Wolf* by Eugene Walters broadcast on WGY, Schenectady, NY.

1923 ***Radio:***
(USA) 16 February - Three scenes from Shakespeare produced by Professor Acton Bond of the British Empire Shakespeare Society

(AUS) First radio licenses granted in Sydney, Australia.

1924 ***SK*** - Saskatchewan Wheat Pool

Radio:
(UK) - 15 January, Richard Hughes' *A Comedy of Danger* airs on the BBC.
- July, the BBC creates a separate department for drama under R. E. Jeffrey

1925 ***Radio:***
(AUS) 21 March - Melbourne, Australia's 3LO airs *The Barbarous Barber*.
(CAN) - CNRA Moncton broadcasts a series of mostly un-adapted stage plays

1926 ***SK*** - Premier James G. Gardiner, Liberal, 1926-1929

Radio:
(CAN) - Vancouver's CNRV starts airing *CNRV players*, performing adaptations, classics, and locally written plays.

(USA) - RCA connects radio networks via AT&T telephone lines allowing program sharing across the country.
- National Broadcasting Company (NBC) is born and starts collecting affiliates across the country. Eventually, NBC splits into two networks, the Red and the Blue (Greenfield 3).

1927 ***Radio:***

(USA) - Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover tries to impose organizing body on the airwaves. The National Radio Commission is created as part of commerce department. The NRC has control over regulation (of frequencies etc.) but limited power over content (Greenfield 2-3).
- Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) is on the national scene (Greenfield 3).

1928 ***SK*** **-** Yorkton incorporated

Radio:

(CAN) - 6, December - Prime Minister Mackenzie King forms the Aird Commission to study radio broadcasting in Canada
- CNRV Vancouver presents three one-act plays by Vancouver authors.

1929 ***Radio:***

(CAN) - February: CNRV Players' broadcast a complete version of Othello.
- April, CNRV Players, with the Vancouver Shakespearian Society, Broadcast *The Merchant of Venice.*
- The CNR Radio Network links twenty-three private stations to broadcast Canada's Diamond Jubilee commemoration from Ottawa.
- September 11, The Aird Commission tables its report.

(UK) - Val Gielgud begins his 20-year reign as the BBC's Drama Department Productions Director.

(USA) - *The Goldbergs* - the immigrant experience in New York 15 minute episodes
- NBC begins airing *Radio Guild*, a showcase of classics and Shakespeare.

1930s ***SK*** – The Great Depression: drought causes catastrophic crop failures; price of wheat falls to its lowest level in recorded history; provincial income drops by 90%.

1930 Canadian election brings R. B. Bennet's Conservatives to power.
SK – Federal Government assigns Natural Resources control to the province.
- Saskatchewan turns 25.

Radio:

(CAN) - Canadian Radio League (CRL) formed to advocate for a public system of radio broadcasting – in hopes of ensuring advertising revenues would not be lost by the print media.

(USA) - *The Shadow* begins. It runs until 1954.
- Goodman and Jane Ace go on the air as *Easy Aces*.

1931 ***SK*** **-** Regina Little Theatre established**.**

Radio:
(CAN) - CNR Radio produces The Romance of Canada series written by Merrill Denison, directed and produced by Tyrone Guthrie, and aired on CNR stations in Ottawa CNRO, Moncton CNRA, Vancouver CNRV – and private networks across the country
(USA) - NBC claims the first network soap: *Clara, Lu, 'n' Em.*

1932 **-** The Dominion Drama Festival begins – continues until 1970. Carries on until 1978 as Theatre Canada.

Radio:
(CAN) - May - *The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission* (the CNRB) is created by a parliamentary committee acting on Aird Report's recommendations favouring public broadcasting for Canada.
(USA) - *Burns and Allen* premieres, starring George Burns and Gracie Allen.
- *Vic and Sade* (1932-1945) debuts. Paul Rhymer goes on to author 3,500 scripts (Drainie 50).
- CBS's American historical drama series, *Roses and Drums* airs.
(AUS) - The Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) created, funded by public license fees.

1932 ***SK*** – 2/3 of Saskatchewan's rural population is on relief.

1933 ***SK*** – Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) holds its first convention in Regina.
Radio:
(CAN) - Regional series under the CRBC are developed in Montreal, Toronto, Halifax, and Winnipeg

(UK) - October - Lawrence Gilliam appointed head of "Special Programmes" at the BBC, serves there until 1964.

1934 **SK** - Premier James G. Gardiner, Liberal, 1934-1935

Radio:
(SK) - January - CKBI Prince Albert opens, airs a radio drama on the founding of the city with the Prince Albert Historical Society.
(CAN) - Vancouver's *The Theatre of the Air* is broadcast.
(USA) - Federal Communications Commission formed to police the technical

aspects of the airwaves – frequency and licensing but not content. The FCC only allows one network per company. Thus, NBC's Blue network becomes American Broadcasting Company, or ABC (Greenfield 4).

1935 ***SK*** – Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act (P.F.R.A.) implemented to promote water conservation and increased efficiency of land use.
- Premier William J. Patterson, Liberal, 1935-1944

Radio:
(CAN) - Robert Caplan's Biblical series *And It Came to Pass*
- CRBC airs Conservative ad agency creation named *Mr. Sage*.
(USA) *Fibber McGee and Molly*

1936 ***Radio:***
(CAN) - The CRBC becomes the CBC with regulation removed from its mandate.

(USA) - *Gang Busters* premieres
- July – CBS's *Columbia Workshop*

(AUS) ABC airs a locally produced Shakespeare series – runs until 1938.

1937 ***Radio:***
(USA) - *The Charlie McCarthy Show* begins.

1938 ***Radio:***
(USA) - October 31, Orson Welles' (in)famous adaptation of H.G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* airs on *Mercury Theatre.*

1939 ***SK*** – Rowell-Sirois Commission reports on the results of the Great Depression, stating: "Canada's most serious economic troubles during the 'thirties had their origin in the impact of the world depression and drouth upon the wheat-growing industry of Saskatchewan."

1939 Canada enters WWII.
Radio:
(SK) - July 1939, CBK begins broadcasting at 50,000 watts from Watrous, SK. It is deemed the "Largest geographical area in the world served by one transmitter" (CBC Communications Dept.)

(USA) *Against the Storm*, a wartime-themed soap opera airs.

(AUS) - ABC slightly expanded their dramatic scope with a series called *From Shakespeare to Shaw.*

1940 ***Radio:***
(USA) - *Abbott and Costello* premieres.

1941 - December, USA enters WWII

Radio:

(AUS) - Douglass Stewart's *Fire on the Snow* receives its first production by Frank Clewlow at ABC.

1942 ***Radio:***

(CAN) - *Baker's Dozen*, a series of 13 half-our plays by Fletcher Markle with producer Andrew Allan. They mark "a genuine turning point for Canadian Radio drama" (Drainie 70). Some claim this signifies the birth of the Golden Age of Canadian Radio Drama (Drainie 71).

1943 ***SK*** – April 23: Tom Sukanen dies in the North Battleford institutional hospital.

1944 ***SK*** - CCF elected in Saskatchewan – first socialist government in North America.
- Premier Thomas C. Douglas, C.C.F., 1944-1961

Radio:

(CAN) - January, the first CBC *Stage* series airs nationally on Sunday evenings.
- The second CBC network, The Dominion, is formed to air popular commercial and American programming (Drainie 77).

1945 ***Radio:***

(CAN) - The CBC broadcasts 260 half-hour plays, 94% written by Canadians this year. In November, Lister Sinclair's *A Play on Words* warrants the review "Radio was grown up last night in Canada" (Drainie 81).

(UK) - BBC drama produces such works as Louis MacNeice's *The Dark Tower* and the *World Theatre* series. *The Third Programme* also begins.

(USA) - When WWII ends, television supplants radio as the dominant media in the United States.

1946 ***Radio:***

(SK) - Mary Pattison begins her eighteen-year stint writing *The Jacksons and Their Neighbours* (CBC's Prairie regional farm family) for the CBC's *Noon Farm Broadcast.*

1947 ***SK*** – Swift Current pilot project - socialized medicine trials begin.

1948 ***SK*** - Saskatchewan Arts Board created to foster drama, music, literature, and art through radio broadcasts and community outreach and involvement.

1949 ***Radio:***

(AUS) - *The Lawsons*, written by Gwen Meredith, premiers on ABC.

(USA) - As television takes over from radio, radio advertising revenues in the USA decline for the first time ever (Greenfield 5).

1953 CBC TV Transmitter opens in Vancouver.

1954 ***Radio:***
(CAN) - May - *The Investigator* by Reuben Ship airs on CBC's *Stage*

1955 ***SK*** – Western Development Museums Open.

1956 – ***Radio:***
(CAN) Canadian Royal Commission on Broadcasting's report advises provisions to protect radio broadcasting, while allowing for the expansion of television.

1957 ***SK*** - Estevan incorporated.

1958 ***SK*** – Lloydminster incorporated.

1960 ***SK*** - 1960 – Melville incorporated.

Radio:
(USA) - November - CBS's Daytime soaps *Ma Perkins*, *Young Doctor Malone*, and *The Second Mrs. Burton*, the last network radio programs, air for the last time.

1961 ***SK*** – CCF changes name to the New Democratic Party, or NDP. Douglas returns to Federal politics to become the N.D.P.'s national leader.
- Premier Woodrow S. Lloyd, C.C.F., 1961-1964

1962 ***SK*** – NDP implements Medicare, the first compulsory medical care program in North America. Saskatchewan Doctors strike.

1964 ***SK*** – Premier W. Ross Thatcher, Liberal, 1964-1971

1965 ***SK*** – Regina's *Globe Theatre* starts touring schools. Its first season five years later, in 1970.

1966 – ***SK*** - *Circle in the Centre* Theatre in Saskatoon (1966-1968).
- Regina's *Theatre Saskatchewan* (1966-1970)

1969 ***SK*** - Saskatchewan Writers Guild formed
- Saskatchewan farmers build Vancouver Terminal.

1971 ***SK*** - Premier Allan E. Blakeney, N.D.P., 1971-1982

1974 ***SK*** - *Persephone Theatre* established in Saskatoon (1974)

1975 ***Radio***
(CAN) – CBC Arts Report (1975-76) recommends a return to more musical and

dramatic programming.

1976 - ***Radio***
(CAN) – CBC FM network created.

1977 ***SK*** - 19 June: Tom Sukanen's remains moved from North Battleford to a site beside his ship at the Sukanen Ship Museum, south of Moose Jaw.

1980 ***SK*** – Saskatchewan's 75th anniversary
- Melfort incorporated.
- After a boom in wheat prices in the 1970s, grain prices drop to historic lows.

Radio:
(SK) - CBC Saskatchewan's Arts à la Carte Festival '80 – radio play series focusing on Saskatchewan history.

1982 ***SK*** - Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre formed.
- Premier Grant Devine, P.C., 1982-1991

1990 ***SK*** - Edouard Beaupré's bones released by Montréal University. Beaupré's relatives bury the remains at Willow Bunch in 1990.

1991 ***SK*** - Premier Roy Romanow, N.D.P., 1991-2001

2000 ***SK*** - Humboldt incorporated.

2001 ***SK*** – Premier Lorne Calvert, N.D.P., 2001-